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THE

RAMBLER.

In FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME the THIRD.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magiſtri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempeſtas, deferor hoſpes.
HOR.

The NINTH EDITION.

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THE

THE RAMBLER.

NUMB. 106. SATURDAY, *March* 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.

CIC.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

IT is neceſſary to the ſucceſs of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumſtances or characters, and enter the heart on that ſide where the paſſions ſtand ready to receive it. A lady ſeldom liſtens with attention to any praiſe but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffick: and the author will ſcarcely be pleaſed without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conſpiracies againſt genius, and the ſlow progreſs of merit, or ſome praiſes of the magnanimity of thoſe who encounter poverty and contempt in the cauſe of knowledge, and truſt for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of poſterity.

An aſſurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the ſettled reciprocation of civility

between amicable writers. To raiſe *monuments more durable than braſs, and more conſpicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boaſt of literature; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themſelves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to diſpoſe them, ſee their edifices periſh as they are towering to completion, and thoſe few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and ſoon ſink by the ſaps of time.

No place affords a more ſtriking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a publick library; for who can ſee the wall crouded on every ſide by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate enquiry, now ſcarcely known but by the catalogue, and preſerved only to increaſe the pomp of learning, without conſidering how many hours have been waſted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praiſes of futurity, how many ſtatues have riſen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagoniſts, and dogmatiſm has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power.

> ———*Non unquam dedit*
> *Documenta fors majora, quàm fragili loco*
> *Starent ſuperbi.*———
>
> Inſulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
> On ſwelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whoſe performances are thus treaſured up in magnificent obſcurity, moſt

moſt are forgotten, becauſe they never deſerved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the ſtratagem of intrigue, or the ſervility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whoſe works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praiſes by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legiſlators of ſcience. Curioſity is naturally excited, their volumes after long enquiry are found, but ſeldom reward the labour of the ſearch. Every period of time has produced theſe bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up a while by the breath of faſhion, and then break at once and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loſs of ancient writers whoſe characters have ſurvived their works; but, perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we ſhould find them only the *Granvilles*, *Montagues*, *Stepneys*, and *Sheffields* of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raiſed to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have ſunk into oblivion, whom it were unjuſt to number with this deſpicable claſs. Various kinds of literary fame ſeem deſtined to various meaſures of duration. Some ſpread into exuberance with a very ſpeedy growth, but ſoon wither and decay; ſome riſe more ſlowly, but laſt long. *Parnaſſus* has its flowers of tranſient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among thoſe whoſe reputation is exhauſted in a ſhort time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of preſent incidents or cha-

racters which ſtrongly intereſt the paſſions, and engage univerſal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we diſcuſs a queſtion which every one is deſirous to underſtand, which is debated in every aſſembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we diſplay the faults or virtues of him whoſe publick conduct has made almoſt every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of ſuch productions all the motives of intereſt and vanity concur; the diſputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his paſſion, and every man is deſirous to inform himſelf concerning affairs ſo vehemently agitated and variouſly repreſented.

It is ſcarcely to be imagined, through how many ſubordinations of intereſt the ardour of party is diffuſed; and what multitudes fancy themſelves affected by every ſatire or panegyrick on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occaſion to mention him with praiſe or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wiſhes to confirm his opinion, and to ſtrengthen his party, will diligently peruſe every paper from which he can hope for ſentiments like his own. An object, however ſmall in itſelf, if placed near to the eye, will engroſs all the rays of light; and a tranſaction, however trivial, ſwells into importance when it preſſes immediately on our attention. He that ſhall peruſe the political pamphlets of any paſt reign, will wonder why they were ſo eagerly read, or ſo loudly praiſed. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confuſion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critick; and the time is coming, when the compoſitions

ſitions of later hirelings ſhall lie equally deſpiſed. In proportion as thoſe who write on temporary ſubjects, are exalted above their merit at firſt, they are afterwards depreſſed below it; nor can the brighteſt elegance of diction, or moſt artful ſubtilty of reaſoning, hope for much eſteem from thoſe whoſe regard is no longer quickened by curioſity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertiſts, even when they contend for philoſophical or theological truth, to be ſoon laid aſide and ſlighted. Either the queſtion is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and oppoſition; or mankind deſpair of underſtanding it, and grow weary of diſturbance, content themſelves with quiet ignorance, and refuſe to be harraſſed with labours which they have no hopes of recompenſing with knowledge.

The authors of new diſcoveries may ſurely expect to be reckoned among thoſe, whoſe writings are ſecure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obſcures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we ſeldom look back to the arguments upon which it was firſt eſtabliſhed, or can bear that tedioufneſs of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakneſs of novelty againſt obſtinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philoſophy is derived from *Boyle*'s diſcovery of the qualities of the air; yet of thoſe who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected; we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without

enquiring what cavils were produced againſt him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themſelves to ſtudies boundleſs and inexhauſtible, as experiments and natural philoſophy. Theſe are always loſt in ſucceſſive compilations as new advances are made, and former obſervations become more familiar. Others ſpend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themſelves overwhelmed by ſubſequent collectors, that equally deſtroy the memory of their predeceſſors by amplification, tranſpoſition, or contraction. Every new ſyſtem of nature gives birth to a ſwarm of expoſitors, whoſe buſineſs is to explain and illuſtrate it, and who can hope to exiſt no longer than the founder of their ſect preſerves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of compoſition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully ſtudied human nature, and can well deſcribe it, may with moſt reaſon flatter his ambition. *Bacon*, among all his pretenſions to the regard of poſterity, ſeems to have pleaſed himſelf chiefly with his Eſſays, *which come home to men's buſineſs and boſoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books laſt*. It may, however, ſatisfy an honeſt and benevolent mind to have been uſeful, though leſs conſpicuous; nor will he that extends his hope to higher rewards, be ſo much anxious to obtain praiſe, as to diſcharge the duty which Providence aſſigns him.

NUMB. 107. TUESDAY, *March* 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere verſibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos muſæ meminiſſe volebant. VIRG.

On themes alternate now the ſwains recite;
The muſes in alternate themes delight. ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the various cenſures, which the unavoidable compariſon of my performances with thoſe of my predeceſſors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of thoſe changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhauſted novelty, and of that intermixture of ſubjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved wearineſs, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and ſolemn ſubjects in the ſame paper, becauſe it ſeems abſurd for an author to counteract himſelf, to preſs at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poiſon of *Dryden*, deſtroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured ſometimes to divert, and ſometimes to elevate; but have imagined it an uſeleſs attempt to diſturb merriment by ſolemnity, or interrupt ſeriouſneſs by drollery. Yet I ſhall this day publiſh two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to pleaſe even when they are not critically approved.

To the RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleaſure in liſtening to the converſation of learned men, eſpecially when they diſcourſe of things which I do not underſtand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many diſputes about the *alteration of the ſtile*, which, they ſay, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I aſked a very great ſcholar what the ſtile was. He told me, he was afraid, I ſhould hardly underſtand him when he informed me, that it was the ſtated and eſtabliſhed method of computing time. It was not, indeed, likely that I ſhould underſtand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we ſhould be at ſo much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time paſt, or the time to come; but I have conſidered them both by myſelf, and think it as fooliſh to count time that is gone, as money that is ſpent; and as for the time which is to come, it only ſeems farther off by counting; and therefore when any pleaſure is promiſed me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have ſince liſtened very attentively to every one that talked upon this ſubject, of whom the greater part ſeem not to underſtand it better than myſelf; for though they often hint how much the nation has been miſtaken, and rejoice that we are at laſt growing wiſer than our anceſtors, I have

have never been able to diſcover from them, that any body has died ſooner or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy, that there was great buſtle with little conſequence.

At laſt, two friends of my papa, Mr. *Cycle*, and Mr. *Starlight*, being, it ſeems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new ſtile. Sweet Mr. *Starlight* —I am ſure I ſhall love his name as long as I live; for he told *Cycle* roundly, with a fierce look, that we ſhould never be right without a *year of confuſion*. Dear Mr. RAMBLER, did you ever hear any thing ſo charming? a whole year of confuſion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confuſion worth a thouſand nights of reſt; and if I can but ſee a year of confuſion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feaſt, and there a maſquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and meſſages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and viſits, and frolicks, and new faſhions, I ſhall not care what they do with the reſt of the time, nor whether they count it by the old ſtile or the new; for I am reſolved to break looſe from the nurſery in the tumult, and play my part among the reſt; and it will be ſtrange if I cannot get a huſband and a chariot in the year of confuſion.

Cycle, who is neither ſo young nor ſo handſome as *Starlight*, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and indeed, if it ſhould come only to this, I think the new ſtile is a delightful thing; for my mamma ſays I ſhall go to

court when I am ſixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of reſtraint will ſoon be at an end. It is ſtrange, that with all the plots that have been laid againſt time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or intereſt, get them but for once to deſtroy eleven months, and then I ſhall be as old as ſome married ladies. But this is deſired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. *Starlight*'s ſcheme; for nothing ſurely could pleaſe me like a year of confuſion, when I ſhall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-maſter one day, and the next for the muſick-maſter, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and ſpend all my time without taſks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to preſcribed hours, or family-rules.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

PROPERANTIA.

Mr. RAMBLER,

I Was ſeized this morning with an unuſual penſiveneſs, and finding that books only ſerved to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenneſs of the air and brightneſs of the ſun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were ſtruck with the hoſpital for the reception of deſerted

deſerted infants, which I ſurveyed with pleaſure, till by a natural train of ſentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what ſhelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick muſt be the tranſition from deluded virtue to ſhameleſs guilt, and from ſhameleſs guilt to hopeleſs wretchedneſs.

The anguiſh that I felt, left me no reſt till I had, by your means, addreſſed myſelf to the publick on behalf of thoſe forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whoſe miſery here might ſatisfy the moſt rigorous cenſor, and whoſe participation of our common nature might ſurely induce us to endeavour, at leaſt, their preſervation from eternal puniſhment.

Theſe were all once, if not virtuous, at leaſt innocent; and might ſtill have continued blameleſs and eaſy, but for the arts and inſinuations of thoſe whoſe rank, fortune, or education, furniſhed them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the ſituation of that woman, who, being forſaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the neceſſity of turning proſtitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful courſe of life, with ſhame, horror, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge? "*The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.*" Their ſighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their miſery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they ſhew the leaſt deſign of eſcaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a taſk too hard for mortals; but to alleviate miſfortunes is often within the moſt limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the moſt wretched of human beings are over-looked and neglected, with equal diſregard of policy and goodneſs.

There are places, indeed, ſet apart, to which theſe unhappy creatures may reſort, when the diſeaſes of incontinence ſeize upon them; but if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced? Either to return with the ſmall remains of beauty to their former guilt, or periſh in the ſtreets with nakedneſs and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and thoughtleſs, in their evening frolicks, ſeen a band of theſe miſerable females, covered with rags, ſhivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of thoſe who perhaps firſt ſeduced them by careſſes of fondneſs, or magnificence of promiſes, go on to reduce others to the ſame wretchedneſs by the ſame means?

To ſtop the increaſe of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the firſt and moſt preſſing conſideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and ſeverity are properly employed. But ſurely thoſe whom paſſion or intereſt have already depraved, have ſome claim to compaſſion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themſelves. Nor will they long groan in their preſent afflictions, if none were to refuſe them relief, but theſe that owe their exemption from the ſame diſtreſs only to their wiſdom and their virtue.

I am, &c.

AMICUS.

NUMB. 108. SATURDAY, *March* 30, 1751.

Sapere aude,
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Ruſticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum. HOR.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wiſe;
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting ſtay,
Till the whole ſtream, which ſtop'd him, ſhould be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.
COWLEY.

AN ancient poet, unreaſonably diſcontented at the preſent ſtate of things, which his ſyſtem of opinions obliged him to repreſent in its worſt form, has obſerved of the earth, "that its "greater part is covered by the uninhabitable "ocean; that of the reſt ſome is encumbered "with naked mountains, and ſome loſt under "barren ſands; ſome ſcorched with unintermit-"ted heat, and ſome petrified with perpetual "froſt; ſo that only a few regions remain for "the production of fruits, the paſture of cattle, "and the accommodation of man."

The ſame obſervation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our preſent ſtate. When we have deducted all that is abſorbed in ſleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irreſiſtibly engroſſed by the tyranny of cuſtom; all that paſſes in regulating the ſuperficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the diſpoſal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of diſeaſe, or ſtolen imperceptibly away by laſſitude and

and languor; we ſhall find that part of our duration very ſmall of which we can truly call ourſelves maſters, or which we can ſpend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are loſt in a rotation of petty cares, in a conſtant recurrence of the ſame employments; many of our proviſions for eaſe or happineſs are always exhauſted by the preſent day; and a great part of our exiſtence ſerves no other purpoſe, than that of enabling us to enjoy the reſt.

Of the few moments which are left in our diſpoſal, it may reaſonably be expected, that we ſhould be ſo frugal, as to let none of them ſlip from us without ſome equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however ſtraitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to conſume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental diſtraction, would yet afford us a large ſpace vacant to the exerciſe of reaſon and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we ſquander much of our allowance, even while we think it ſparing and inſufficient.

This natural and neceſſary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us inſenſible of the negligence with which we ſuffer them to ſlide away. We never conſider ourſelves as poſſeſſed at once of time ſufficient for any great deſign, and therefore indulge ourſelves in fortuitous amuſements. We think it unneceſſary to take an account of a few ſupernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were expoſed to a thouſand chances of diſturbance and interruption.

It

It is obſervable, that either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjuſt great things by diviſion, and little things by accumulation. Of extenſive ſurfaces we can only take a ſurvey, as the parts ſucceed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive, till they are united unto maſſes. Thus we break the vaſt periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we muſt agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parſimonious anceſtors have informed us, that the fatal waſte of fortune is by ſmall expences, by the profuſion of ſums too little ſingly to alarm our caution, and which we never ſuffer ourſelves to conſider together. Of the ſame kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with ſatisfaction upon paſt years, muſt learn to know the preſent value of ſingle minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall uſeleſs to the ground.

It is uſual for thoſe who are adviſed to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themſelves as required to change the general courſe of their conduct, to diſmiſs buſineſs, and exclude pleaſure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that ſhould ſteadily and reſolutely aſſign to any ſcience or language thoſe interſtitial vacancies which intervene in the moſt crowded variety of diverſion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and diſcover how much more is to be hoped from

frequency

frequency and perſeverance, than from violent efforts and ſudden deſires; efforts which are ſoon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and deſires which, if they are indulged too often, will ſhake off the authority of reaſon, and range capriciouſly from one object to another.

The diſpoſition to defer every important deſign to a time of leiſure, and a ſtate of ſettled uniformity, proceeds generally from a falſe eſtimate of the human powers. If we except thoſe gigantick and ſtupendous intelligences who are ſaid to graſp a ſyſtem by intuition, and bound forward from one ſeries of concluſions to another, without regular ſteps through intermediate propoſitions, the moſt ſucceſsful ſtudents make their advances in knowledge by ſhort flights, between each of which the mind may lie at reſt. For every ſingle act of progreſſion a ſhort time is ſufficient; and it is only neceſſary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to ſevere and laborious meditation; and when a ſucceſsful attack on knowledge has been made, the ſtudent recreates himſelf with the contemplation of his conqueſt, and forbears another incurſion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curioſity calls upon him for freſh gratifications. Whether the time of intermiſſion is ſpent in company, or in ſolitude, in neceſſary buſineſs, or in voluntary levities, the underſtanding is equally abſtracted from the object of enquiry; but, perhaps, if it be detained by occupations leſs pleaſing, it returns again to ſtudy with greater alacrity, than when it is glutted with ideal pleaſures, and ſurfeited with intemperance of application. He that

that will not ſuffer himſelf to be diſcouraged by fancied impoſſibilities, may ſometimes find his abilities invigorated by the neceſſity of exerting them in ſhort intervals, as the force of a current is increaſed by the contraction of its channel.

From ſome cauſe like this, it has probably proceeded, that among thoſe who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have riſen to eminence in oppoſition to all the obſtacles which external circumſtances could place in their way, amidſt the tumult of buſineſs, the diſtreſſes of poverty, or the diſſipations of a wandering and unſettled ſtate. A great part of the life of *Eraſmus* was one continual peregrination; ill ſupplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means by unſhaken conſtancy, and a vigilant improvement of thoſe hours, which, in the midſt of the moſt reſtleſs activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the ſame condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and ſolicitation, and ſo much verſed in common life, that he has tranſmitted to us the moſt perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, ſuch application to books, that he will ſtand for ever in the firſt rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he ſufficiently diſcovers, by informing us, that the *Praiſe of Folly*, one of his moſt celebrated performances, was compoſed by him on the road to *Italy*; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit inſidendum, illiteratis fabulis terreretur*, leſt the hours

hours which he was obliged to ſpend on horſe-back, ſhould be tattled away without regard to literature.

An *Italian* philoſopher expreſſed in his motto, that *time was his eſtate*; an eſtate indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of induſtry, and ſatisfy the moſt extenſive deſires, if no part of it be ſuffered to lie waſte by negligence, to be over-run with noxious plants, or laid out for ſhew rather than for uſe.

NUMB. 109. TUESDAY, *April* 2, 1751.

Gratum eſt, quod patriæ civem, populoque dediſti,
Si facis ut patriæ ſit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus inſtitutas. JUV.

Grateful the gift! a member to the ſtate,
If you that member uſeful ſhall create;
Train'd both to war, and when the war ſhall ceaſe,
As fond, as fit t'improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy. ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you ſeem to have taken a view ſufficiently extenſive of the miſeries of life, and have employed much of your ſpeculation on mournful ſubjects, you have not yet exhauſted the whole ſtock of human infelicity. There is ſtill a ſpecies of wretchedneſs which eſcapes your obſervation,

vation, though it might ſupply you with many ſage remarks, and ſalutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the ſtart of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this inſtant ſee the Rambler ſnuffing his candle, rubbing his ſpectacles, ſtirring his fire, locking out interruption, and ſettling himſelf in his eaſy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without diſturbance. For, whether it be that continued ſickneſs or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterneſs of being; or that you imagine none but yourſelf able to diſcover what I ſuppoſe has been ſeen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world: whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the publick; or fancy that you have ſome particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain, that whatever be your ſubject, melancholy for the moſt part burſts in upon your ſpeculation, your gaiety is quickly overcaſt, and though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleaſantry, they are ſeldom diſmiſſed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own ſyllables of ſadneſs, I will inform you that I was condemned by ſome diſaſtrous influence to be an only ſon, born to the apparent proſpect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when ſatiety of common diverſions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenſeneſs. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feaſts, and dances, and bagpipes; congratulations were ſent from every family within ten miles round; and

my,

my parents diſcovered in my firſt cries ſuch tokens of future virtue and underſtanding, that they declared themſelves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happineſs and the increaſe of their eſtate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouſes, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries againſt the intruſion of thought.

When there is ſuch a parity between two perſons aſſociated for life, the dejection which the huſband, if he be not completely ſtupid, muſt always ſuffer for want of ſuperiority, ſinks him to ſubmiſſiveneſs. My mamma therefore governed the family without controul; and except that my father ſtill retained ſome authority in the ſtables, and now and then, after a ſupernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glaſs or china diſh to prove his ſovereignty, the whole courſe of the year was regulated by her direction, the ſervants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or diſmiſſed at her diſcretion.

She therefore thought herſelf entitled to the ſuperintendance of her ſon's education; and when my father, at the inſtigation of the parſon, faintly propoſed that I ſhould be ſent to ſchool, very poſitively told him, that ſhe would not ſuffer ſo fine a child to be ruined; that ſhe never knew any boys at a grammar-ſchool that could come into a room without bluſhing, or ſit at the table without ſome aukward uneaſineſs; that they were always putting

putting themſelves into danger by boiſterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, ſhe would rather follow me to the grave than ſee me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and ſneak about with dirty ſhoes, and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his propoſal than to appear wiſe and manly, ſoon acquieſced, ſince I was not to live by my learning; for indeed, he had known very few ſtudents that had not ſome ſtiffneſs in their manner. They therefore agreed, that a domeſtick tutor ſhould be procured, and hired an honeſt gentleman of mean converſation and narrow ſentiments, but whom, having paſſed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a ſcholar. He thought himſelf ſufficiently exalted by being placed at the ſame table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmoſt flexibility of ſubmiſſion to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, leſt I ſhould mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally bruſhed by coat before he diſmiſſed me into the parlour.

He had no occaſion to complain of too burdenſome an employment; for my mother very judiciouſly conſidered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and ſuffered me not to paſs any more time in his apartment than my leſſon required. When I was ſummoned to my taſk, ſhe enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was ſeldom mentioned before me but for

for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admoniſhed not to lean on my chair, croſs my legs, or ſwing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very ſeriouſly deliberated upon his total diſmiſſion, becauſe I began, ſhe ſaid, to learn his manner of ſticking on my hat, and had his bend in my ſhoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I eſcaped all theſe depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myſelf of every appearance of childiſh diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickneſs of my replies; and many a ſcholar five years older than myſelf have I daſhed into confuſion by the ſteadineſs of my countenance, ſilenced by my readineſs of repartee, and tortured with envy by the addreſs with which I picked up a fan, preſented a ſnuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely ſkilled in all the niceties of dreſs, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of ſilks, and diſtinguiſh the product of a *French* loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and obſerve every deviation from the reigning mode. I was univerſally ſkilful in all the changes of expenſive finery; but as every one, they ſay, has ſomething to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in *Bruſſels* lace.

The next year ſaw me advanced to the truſt and power of adjuſting the ceremonial of an aſſembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every ſtranger applied for introduction. My heart now diſdained the inſtructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a ſmall annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myſelf.

In a ſhort time I came to *London*, and as my father was well known among the higher claſſes of life, ſoon obtained admiſſion to the moſt ſplendid aſſemblies, and moſt crouded card-tables. Here I found myſelf univerſally careſſed and applauded: the ladies praiſed the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the ſoftneſs of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themſelves to my notice; and invited by a thouſand oblique ſolicitations my attendance to the playhouſe, and my ſalutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmoſt extent of my conception; I paſſed every morning in dreſs, every afternoon in viſits, and every night in ſome ſelect aſſemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were ſuffered to moleſt us.

After a few years, however, theſe delights became familiar, and I had leiſure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of ſatiety, or recreate wearineſs, by varied amuſement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the ſphere of my pleaſures, and to try what ſatisfaction might be found in the ſociety of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whoſe name I had heard mentioned with reſpect, received me with a kind of tenderneſs nearly bordering on compaſſion; and that thoſe whoſe reputation was not well eſtabliſhed, thought it neceſſary to juſtify their underſtandings, by treating me with contempt. One of theſe witlings elevated his creſt, by aſking me in a full coffeehouſe the price of patches; and another whiſpered, that he wondered why miſs *Friſk* did not keep me that afternoon to watch her ſquirrel.

When

When I found myſelf thus hunted from all maſculine converſation by thoſe who were themſelves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and reſolved to dedicate my life to their ſervice and their pleaſure. But I find that I have now loſt my charms. Of thoſe with whom I entered the gay world, ſome are married, ſome have retired, and ſome have ſo much changed their opinion, that they ſcarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addreſſes, ſuffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myſelf welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either uſe or dignity to life, are content to paſs their hours between their bed and their cards, without eſteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. RAMBLER, that I have reaſon to complain; for ſurely the females ought to pay ſome regard to the age of him whoſe youth was paſſed in endeavours to pleaſe them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to puniſh it in the man. Yet I find, that though they laviſh their firſt fondneſs upon pertneſs and gaiety, they ſoon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their laſt years in ſtupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

NUMB. 110. SATURDAY, *April* 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter eſt, et clara dies, et gratia ſim; lex.
Spem ſequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præſentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS.

We thro' this maze of life one Lord obey;
Whoſe light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith ſecure of future bliſs,
Gladly the joys of preſent life we miſs:
For baffled mortals ſtill attempt in vain,
Preſent and future bliſs at once to gain. F. LEWIS.

THAT to pleaſe the Lord and Father of the univerſe, is the ſupreme intereſt of created and dependent beings, as it is eaſily proved, has been univerſally confeſſed; and ſince all rational agents are conſcious of having neglected or violated the duties preſcribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or puniſhed by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore conſtitutes a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and intereſt tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may ſometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at leaſt ſhew the general conſent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be eſtabliſhed as the firſt and fundamental truth of religion; for though the knowledge of his exiſtence is the origin of philo-

ſophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no proſpect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the leaſt deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a creator, whom he muſt conſider as a governor too pure to be pleaſed, and too ſevere to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wiſe, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, eſcape, nor reſiſt.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A conſtant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terreſtrial diligence; and therefore the progreſs of life could only have been the natural deſcent of negligent deſpair from crime to crime, had not the univerſal perſuaſion of forgiveneſs to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled thoſe to the paths of virtue whom their paſſions had ſolicited aſide; and animated to new attempts, and firmer perſeverance, thoſe whom difficulty had diſcouraged, or negligence ſurpriſed.

In times and regions ſo disjoined from each other, that there can ſcarcely be imagined any communication of ſentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal auſterities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeaſing his juſtice by a ſpeedy and cheerful ſubmiſſion to a leſs penalty when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel ſome inclination towards exterior acts, and ritual obſervances. Ideas not repreſented by ſenſible objects are fleeting,

fleeting, variable, and evaneſcent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by ſome certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once eſtabliſh the neceſſary proportion between crimes and ſufferings, might ſecurely reſt upon his performance of the expiation; but while ſafety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid leſt he ſhould decide too ſoon in his own favour, leſt he ſhould not have felt the pangs of true contrition; leſt he ſhould miſtake ſatiety for deteſtation, or imagine that his paſſions are ſubdued when they are only ſleeping.

From this natural and reaſonable diffidence aroſe, in humble and timorous piety, a diſpoſition to confound penance with repentance, to repoſe on human determinations, and to receive from ſome judicial ſentence the ſtated and regular aſſignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without reſource: we ſeek in the knowledge of others a ſuccour for our own ignorance, and are ready to truſt any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourſelves.

This deſire to aſcertain by ſome outward marks the ſtate of the ſoul, and this willingneſs to calm the conſcience by ſome ſettled method, have produced, as they are diverſified in their effects by various tempers and principles, moſt of the diſquiſitions and rules, the doubts and ſolutions, that have embarraſſed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable ſcruples concerning the neceſſary meaſures of ſorrow, and adequate degrees of ſelf-abhor-

rence; and these rules corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it, to be easily separated; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced, that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger considered as imminent naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who

considers

conſiders himſelf as ſuſpended over the abyſs of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which muſt ſoon part by its own weakneſs, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can caſt his eyes round him without ſhuddering with horror, or panting with ſecurity; what can he judge of himſelf but that he is not yet awakened to ſufficient conviction, ſince every loſs is more lamented than the loſs of the divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleaſures of the world has been often recommended as uſeful to repentance. This at leaſt is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occaſions: and ſurely the retroſpect of life, the diſentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumſtances, and diffuſed in various relations, the diſcovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of luſts and appetites deeply rooted and widely ſpread, may be allowed to demand ſome receſſion from ſport and noiſe, and buſineſs and folly. Some ſuſpenſion of common affairs, ſome pauſe of temporal pain and pleaſure, is doubtleſs neceſſary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miſcarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only queſtion in which miſtake cannot be rectified.

Auſterities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and rouſed, by which the attractions of pleaſure are interrupted, and the chains of ſenſuality are broken. It is obſerved by one of the fathers, that *he who reſtrains himſelf in the uſe of things lawful, will never encroach*

upon things forbidden. Abſtinence, if nothing more, is, at leaſt, a cautious retreat from the utmoſt verge of permiſſion, and confers that ſecurity which cannot be reaſonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of deſtruction, or delights to approach the pleaſures which he knows it fatal to partake. Auſterity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diſeaſes of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we ſhould readily have recourſe, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and ſum of repentance is a change of life. That ſorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our eſcape, that auſterity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But ſorrow and terror muſt naturally precede reformation; for what other cauſe can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himſelf alarmed by his conſcience, anxious for the attainment of a better ſtate, and afflicted by the memory of his paſt faults, may juſtly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of ſtrengthening his conviction, to impreſs upon his mind ſuch a ſenſe of the divine preſence, as may overpower the blandiſhments of ſecular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holineſs to another, till death ſhall ſet him free from doubt and conteſt, miſery and temptation.

What better can we do than proſtrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confeſs
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Wat'ring the ground, and with our ſighs the air
Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite, in ſign
Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

NUMB. 111. TUESDAY, *April* 9, 1751.

Φρονῶν γὰρ ὁ ταχὺς, οὐκ ἀσφαλὴς. SOPHOC.

Diſaſter always waits on early wit.

IT has been obſerved, by long experience, that late ſprings produce the greateſt plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the moſt part liberally recompenſed by the exuberance and fecundity of the enſuing ſeaſons; the bloſſoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the ſun is high, eſcape thoſe chilling blaſts, and nocturnal froſts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the firſt ſmiles of vernal beauty, deſtroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the gem, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of perſuading the young and ſprightly part of my readers, upon whom the ſpring naturally forces my attention, to learn from the great proceſs of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between ſpeed and precipitation; to proſecute their deſigns with calmneſs, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprize and hope; having yet no occaſion of comparing our force with any oppoſing power, we naturally form preſumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obſtruction and impediment will give way before us. The firſt repulſes rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it ſuſpects its own weakneſs, or ſubmits to ſap the difficulties

which it expected to ſubdue by ſtorm. Before diſappointments have enforced the dictates of philoſophy, we believe it in our power to ſhorten the interval between the firſt cauſe and the laſt effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding induſtry, and fancy that, by increaſing the fire, we can at pleaſure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promiſes of time ſufficient for the regular maturation of our ſchemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquiſitions, we are eager to ſeize the preſent moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without ſuffering it to ripen into perfection, and croud all the varieties of delight into a narrow compaſs: but age ſeldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have leſs remaining, and ſuffer the laſt part of life to ſteal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or ſlow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of ſome fortuitous occurrence, or drowſy equilibrations of undetermined counſel. Whether it be that the aged, having taſted the pleaſures of man's condition, and found them deluſive, become leſs anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miſcarriages have depreſſed them to deſpair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death ſhocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themſelves of their decay, or to diſcover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is paſt.

A perpetual conflict with natural deſires ſeems to be the lot of our preſent ſtate. In youth we require ſomething of the tardineſs and frigidity of age; and in age we muſt labour to recall the fire

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and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be born at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet since the fear of missing what we seek must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint,

and ſuffer themſelves to be ſurpaſſed by the even and regular perſeverance of ſlower underſtandings.

It frequently happens, that applauſe abates diligence. Whoever finds himſelf to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to ſpare the labour of unneceſſary performances, and ſit down to enjoy at eaſe his ſuperfluities of honour. He whom ſucceſs has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuouſly on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himſelf able to leave behind whenever he ſhall again ſummon his force to the conteſt. But long intervals of pleaſure diſſipate attention, and weaken conſtancy; nor is it eaſy for him that has ſunk from diligence into ſloth, to rouſe out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curioſity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of ſtudy.

Even that friendſhip which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obſtruct it. The pleaſure of being careſſed, diſtinguiſhed, and admired, eaſily ſeduces the ſtudent from literary ſolitude. He is ready to follow the call which ſummons him to hear his own praiſe, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleaſures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleaſures which he conceives inexhauſtible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to diſtruſt.

Theſe evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or conſidered as inſeparable from an early diſplay of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly eſcaped by prudence and reſolution, and muſt therefore be recounted rather as conſolations to thoſe who are leſs liberally endowed,

ed, than as diſcouragements to ſuch as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the perſecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raiſe the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modeſty have made moſt eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniencies of an amiable form? or would have purchaſed ſafety by the loſs of charms?

Neither grace of perſon, nor vigour of underſtanding, are to be regarded otherwiſe than as bleſſings, as means of happineſs indulged by the Supreme benefactor; but the advantages of either may be loſt by too much eagerneſs to obtain them. A thouſand beauties in their firſt bloſſom, by an imprudent expoſure to the open world, have ſuddenly withered at the blaſt of infamy; and men who might have ſubjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praiſe of their firſt productions from academical retirement, and waſted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too ſoon aſpires to celebrity and conqueſt, periſhes by childiſh vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltleſs indiſcretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loſes thoſe years which might have been moſt uſefully employed, the years of youth, of ſpirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable abſurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it moſt; we are in haſte to meet enemies whom we have not ſtrength to overcome, and to undertake taſks which we cannot perform: and as he that once

miſcarries does not eaſily perſuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual ſtruggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obſcurity.

NUMB. 112. SATURDAY, *April* 13, 1751.

In mea vesanæ bubuli diſpendia virtus,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipſe meas. OVID.

Of ſtrength pernicious to myſelf I boaſt;
The pow'rs I have were giv'n me to my coſt. F. LEWIS.

WE are taught by *Celſus*, that health is beſt preſerved by avoiding ſettled habits of life, and deviating ſometimes into ſlight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exerciſe, interrupting the ſucceſſions of reſt and labour, and mingling hardſhips with indulgence. The body long accuſtomed to ſtated quantities and uniform periods, is diſordered by the ſmalleſt irregularity; and ſince we cannot adjuſt every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit ſometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with neceſſary affairs, or ſtrong inclinations. He that too long obſerves nice punctualities, condemns himſelf to voluntary imbecility, and will not long eſcape the miſeries of diſeaſe.

The ſame laxity of regimen is equally neceſſary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual ſuſceptibility of occaſional pleaſure. Long confinement to the ſame company which perhaps ſimilitude of taſte brought firſt together, quickly contracts his faculties, and makes a thouſand things offenſive that are in themſelves indifferent; a man accuſtomed

tomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may, by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the croud of life, be harrassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotick softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries, from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and, therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease to some other period of existence. It is well known, that, exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences; and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial

ficial faſtidiouſneſs, which ſhall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, ſhew us the naked ſkeleton of every delight, and preſent us only with the pains of pleaſure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peeviſhneſs, indeed, would perhaps very little diſturb the peace of mankind, were it always the conſequence of ſuperfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to deſtroy happineſs by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undiſputed ſuperiority, the dull and thoughtleſs may likewiſe acquire the power of tormenting themſelves and others, and become ſufficiently ridiculous or hateful to thoſe who are within ſight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a ſingle ſtate are generally found to be moroſe, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; ſoon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any aſſociation, but with thoſe that will watch their nod, and ſubmit themſelves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the neceſſity of conſulting any inclination but their own.

The iraſcibility of this claſs of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, ſuch as are incident to underſtandings not far extended beyond the inſtincts of animal life; but unhappily he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long ceſſations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury, upon whom every noon brings a paroxyſm of violence, fury, and execration; they never ſit down to their dinner with-

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out finding the meat ſo injudiciouſly bought, or ſo unſkilfully dreſſed, ſuch blunders in the ſeaſoning, or ſuch improprieties in the ſauce, as can ſcarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the tranſports of reſentment, make very little diſtinctions between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their diſcontent upon all whom fortune expoſes to the ſtorm.

It is not eaſy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peeviſh man. In every other ſtate of inferiority the certainty of pleaſing is perpetually increaſed by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindneſs and confidence are ſtrengthened by every new act of truſt, and proof of fidelity. But peeviſhneſs ſacrifices to a momentary offence, the obſequiouſneſs or uſefulneſs of half a life, and as more is performed increaſes her exactions.

Chryſa'us gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his ſons. The boy was diſmiſſed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned againſt all oppoſition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perſeverance by the hopes of ſupporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of ſentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard falſe accuſations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obſtreperouſly at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; aſked queſtions about

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the univerſal decay of trade; admired the ſtrength of thoſe heads by which the price of ſtocks is changed and adjuſted; and behaved with ſuch prudence and circumſpection, that after ſix years the will was made, and *Juvenculus* was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbittered by age or ſolitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and ſpiteful ſuperintendance of domeſtick trifles. *Eriphile* has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of ſervants, the naſtineſs of her houſe, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preſerving tapeſtry from the moths, and the careleſneſs of the ſluts whom ſhe employs in bruſhing it. It is her buſineſs every morning to viſit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window ſhut or open contrary to her orders, a ſpot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the reſt of the day may be juſtifiably ſpent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpoſe but to preſerve the neatneſs of a houſe and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleaſure, nor aſpiration after virtue, while ſhe is engroſſed by the great employment of keeping gravel from graſs, and wainſcot from duſt. Of three amiable nieces ſhe has declared herſelf an irreconcileable enemy to one, becauſe ſhe broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, becauſe ſhe ſpilt her coffee on a turkey carpet; and to the third, becauſe

cauſe ſhe let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourſe of viſits, becauſe company makes a houſe dirty; and reſolves to confine herſelf more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by fooliſh lenity.

Peeviſhneſs is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguiſh and diſeaſe, by which the reſolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lighteſt addition to its miſeries, proceeds from an unreaſonable perſuaſion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy againſt it is, to conſider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of ſuffering perturbation and uneaſineſs from cauſes unworthy of our notice.

He that reſigns his peace to little caſualties, and ſuffers the courſe of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies, or offences, delivers up himſelf to the direction of the wind, and loſes all that conſtancy and equanimity which conſtitute the chief praiſe of a wiſe man.

The province of prudence lies between the greateſt things and the leaſt; ſome ſurpaſs our power by their magnitude, and ſome eſcape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indiſpenſable buſineſs of life will afford ſufficient exerciſe to every underſtanding; and ſuch is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we muſt let things of importance paſs unobſerved: when we examine a mite within a glaſs, we ſee nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's intereſt to be pleaſed, will need little proof: that it is his intereſt to pleaſe others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not leſs neceſſary to happineſs than to virtue, that

he rid his mind of paſſions which make him uneaſy to himſelf, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obſtruct his improvement.

NUMB. 113. TUESDAY, *April* 16, 1751.

——Uxorem, Poſthume ducis?
Dic, quâ Tiſiphone, quibus exagitare colubris? JUV.

A ſober man like thee to change his life!
What fury wou'd poſſeſs thee with a wife? DRYDEN.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I Know not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat cenſure with contempt. We owe ſo much reverence to the wiſdom of mankind, as juſtly to wiſh, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other ſuffrages; and ſince guilt and infamy muſt have the ſame effect upon intelligences unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a falſe charge, leſt we ſhould countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accuſation with ſupercilious ſilence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villainy, and inſpirited by innocence. The wall of braſs which *Horace* erects upon a clear conſcience, may be ſometimes raiſed by impudence or power; and we ſhould always wiſh to preſerve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedneſs cannot aſſume.

For

For this reaſon I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or ſullen reſignation, a reproach, which is, at leaſt in my opinion, unjuſt; but will lay my caſe honeſtly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preſerve your boaſted impartiality, when you hear, that I am conſidered as an adverſary by half the female world, you may ſurely pardon me for doubting, notwithſtanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourſelf entitled by your age, your learning, your abſtraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. RAMBLER, has often overpowered the reſolutions of the firm, and the reaſonings of the wiſe, roufed the old to ſenſibility, and ſubdued the rigorous to ſoftneſs.

I am one of thoſe unhappy beings, who have been marked out as huſbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have diſcuſſed all the nuptial preliminaries ſo often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are ſettled, pin-money ſecured, and proviſions for younger children aſcertained; but am at laſt doomed by general conſent to everlaſting ſolitude, and excluded by an irreverſible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man whoſe viſits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raiſes hopes only to embitter diſappointment, and makes offers only to ſeduce girls into a waſte of that part of life, in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become miſtreſſes and mothers.

I hope you will think, that ſome part of this penal ſeverity may juſtly be remitted, when I inform

form you, that I never yet profeſſed love to a woman without ſincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preſerve her whom I was leaving from the ſhock of abruptneſs, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of ſeeming to diſcard me; and that I never forſook a miſtreſs for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but becauſe I diſcovered ſome irregularity in her conduct, or ſome depravity in her mind; not becauſe I was charmed by another, but becauſe I was offended by herſelf.

I was very early tired of that ſucceſſion of amuſements by which the thoughts of moſt young men are diſſipated, and had not long glittered in the ſplendour of an ample patrimony before I wiſhed for the calm of domeſtick happineſs. Youth is naturally delighted with ſprightlineſs and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the ſighs of my firſt affection at the feet of the gay, the ſparkling, the vivacious *Ferocula*. I fancied to myſelf a perpetual ſource of happineſs in wit never exhauſted, and ſpirit never depreſſed; looked with veneration on her readineſs of expedients, contempt of difficulty, aſſurance of addreſs, and promptitude of reply; conſidered her as exempt by ſome prerogative of nature from the weakneſs and timidity of female minds: and congratulated myſelf upon a companion ſuperior to all common troubles and embarraſſments. I was, indeed, ſomewhat diſturbed by the unſhaken perſeverance with which ſhe enforced her demands of an unreaſonable ſettlement; yet I ſhould have

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conſented to paſs my life in union with her, had not my curioſity led me to a croud gathered in the ſtreet, where I found *Ferocu'a*, in the preſence of hundreds, diſputing for ſix-pence with a chairman. I ſaw her in ſo little need of aſſiſtance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interpoſition, and I ſpared myſelf the ſhame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot ſome point of ceremony at our next interview, and ſoon provoked her to forbid me her preſence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philoſophy. I had frequently obſerved the barrenneſs and uniformity of connubial converſation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and diſcernment when I ſelected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read *Miſothea*, who declared herſelf the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertneſs, and puerile levity; and ſcarcely condeſcended to make tea, but for the linguiſt, the geometrician, the aſtronomer, or the poet. The queen of the *Amazons* was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in ſingle combat; and *Miſothea*'s heart was only to bleſs the ſcholar who could overpower her by diſputation. Amidſt the fondeſt tranſports of courtſhip ſhe could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular ſyllogiſm. You may eaſily imagine, that I wiſhed this courtſhip at an end; but when I deſired her to ſhorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long converſation, in which *Miſothea* endeavoured to demonſtrate the folly of attributing choice and

and ſelf-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to diſcover the danger of committing myſelf for ever to the arms of one who might at any time miſtake the dictates of paſſion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or conſider cuckoldom as neceſſary to the general ſyſtem, as a link in the everlaſting chain of ſucceſſive cauſes. I therefore told her, that deſtiny had ordained us to part; and that nothing ſhould have torn me from her but the talons of neceſſity.

I then ſolicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical *Sophronia*, a lady who conſidered wit as dangerous, and learning as ſuperfluous; and thought that the woman who kept her houſe clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a ſudden call, enquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of ſtocks once a week, and purchaſed every thing at the beſt market, could want no accompliſhments neceſſary to the happineſs of a wiſe man. She diſcourſed with great ſolemnity on the care and vigilance which the ſuperintendence of a family demands; obſerved how many were ruined by confidence in ſervants; and told me, that ſhe never expected honeſty but from a ſtrong cheſt, and that the beſt ſtorekeeper was the miſtreſs's eye. Many ſuch oracles of generoſity ſhe uttered, and made every day new improvements in her ſchemes for the regulation of her ſervants, and the diſtribution of her time. I was convinced, that whatever I might ſuffer from *Sophronia*, I ſhould eſcape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjuſt the ſettlements according to her own rule, *fair and ſofily*. But one morning her maid

maid came to me in tears to intreat my intereſt for a reconciliation to her miſtreſs, who had turned her out at night for breaking ſix teeth in a tortoiſe-ſhell comb: ſhe had attended her lady from a diſtant province, and having not lived long enough to ſave much money, was deſtitute among ſtrangers, and though of a good family, in danger of periſhing in the ſtreets, or of being compelled by hunger to proſtitution. I made no ſcruple of promiſing to reſtore her; but upon my firſt application to *Sophronia* was anſwered with an air which called for approbation, that if ſhe neglected her own affairs, I might ſuſpect her of neglecting mine; that the comb ſtood her in three half-crowns; that no ſervant ſhould wrong her twice; and that indeed ſhe took the firſt opportunity of parting with *Phyllida*, becauſe, though ſhe was honeſt, her conſtitution was bad, and ſhe thought her very likely to fall ſick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it ſurely may be forgiven me, if on this occaſion I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was diſengaged by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the ſame time, and determining their choice by the liberality of our ſettlements. For another I thought myſelf juſtified in forſaking her, becauſe ſhe gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another becauſe I could never ſoften her to tenderneſs, till ſhe heard that moſt of my family had died young; and another, becauſe, to increaſe her fortune by expectations, ſhe repreſented her ſiſter as languiſhing and conſumptive.

I ſhall in another letter give the remaining part of my hiſtory of courtſhip. I preſume that I ſhould

ſhould hitherto have injured the majeſty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

NUMB. 114. SATURDAY, *April* 20, 1751.

——*Audi,*
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa eſt. JUV.
——When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate. DRYDEN.

POWER and ſuperiority are ſo flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and expoſed to danger as they are, ſcarcely any virtue is ſo cautious, or any prudence ſo timorous, as to decline them. Even thoſe that have moſt reverence for the laws of right, are pleaſed with ſhewing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wiſh to paſs; and, as the *Roman* ſatiriſt remarks, he that has no deſign to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the ſame principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the deſire of inveſting lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than perſuaſion. Pride is unwilling to believe the neceſſity of aſſigning any other reaſon than her own will; and would rather

rather maintain the moſt equitable claims by violence and penalties, than deſcend from the dignity of command to diſpute and expoſtulation.

It may, I think, be ſuſpected, that this political arrogance has ſometimes found its way into legiſlative aſſemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A ſlight peruſal of the laws by which the meaſures of vindictive and coercive juſtice are eſtabliſhed, will diſcover ſo many diſproportions between crimes and puniſhments, ſuch capricious diſtinctions of guilt, and ſuch confuſion of remiſſneſs and ſeverity, as can ſcarcely be believed to have been produced by publick wiſdom, ſincerely and calmly ſtudious of publick happineſs.

The learned, the judicious, the pious *Boerhaave* relates, that he never ſaw a criminal dragged to execution without aſking himſelf, "Who "knows whether this man is not leſs culpable "than me?" On the days when the priſons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every ſpectator of the dreadful proceſſion put the ſame queſtion to his own heart. Few among thoſe that croud in thouſands to the legal maſſacre, and look with careleſneſs, perhaps with triumph, on the utmoſt exacerbations of human miſery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For, who can congratulate himſelf upon a life paſſed without ſome act more miſchievous to the peace or proſperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular ſpecies of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its ſuppreſſion by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of male-

factors is commonly cut off, and their ſucceſſors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and ſubtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the purſuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally ſubjected to the ſevereſt puniſhment that man has the power of exerciſing upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to eſtimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loſs or pain which ſingle acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety ariſing from the fear of miſchief, and inſecurity of poſſeſſion: he therefore exerciſes the right which ſocieties are ſuppoſed to have over the lives of thoſe that compoſe them, not ſimply to puniſh a tranſgreſſion, but to maintain order, and preſerve quiet; he enforces thoſe laws with ſeverity that are moſt in danger of violation, as the commander of a garriſon doubles the guard on that ſide which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with ſo little ſucceſs, that rapine and violence are hourly increaſing: yet few ſeem willing to deſpair of its efficacy, and of thoſe who employ their ſpeculations upon the preſent corruption of the people, ſome propoſe the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrifick puniſhments; ſome are inclined to accelerate the executions; ſome to diſcourage pardons; and all ſeem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedneſs,

neſs, and that we can only be reſcued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and ſanguinary juſtice.

Yet ſince the right of ſetting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been diſputed, and ſince experience of paſt times gives us little reaſon to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be uſeleſs to conſider what conſequences might ariſe from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients obſerves, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the moſt dreadful*; an evil, beyond which nothing can be threatened by ſublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror ſhould, therefore, be reſerved as the laſt reſort of authority, as the ſtrongeſt and moſt operative of prohibitory ſanctions, and placed before the treaſure of life, to guard from invaſion what cannot be reſtored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commiſſion of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a leſs. If only murder were puniſhed with death, very few robbers would ſtain their hands in blood; but when, by the laſt act of cruelty no new danger is incurred, and greater ſecurity may be obtained, upon what principle ſhall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the ſentence is often mitigated to ſimple robbery; but ſurely this is to confeſs that our laws are unreaſonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be obſerved, that

all but murderers have, at their laſt hour, the common ſenſations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the puniſhment to the offence proceeds the frequent ſolicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet ſhocked at the thought of deſtroying him. His crime ſhrinks to nothing, compared with his miſery; and ſeverity defeats itſelf by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly diſables thoſe who die upon it from infeſting the community; but their death ſeems not to contribute more to the reformation of their aſſociates, than any other method of ſeparation. A thief ſeldom paſſes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery haſtens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave cloſes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital puniſhments therefore rarely hinders the commiſſion of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reaſon to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by caſuiſts or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will ſcarcely believe that two malefactors ſo different in guilt can be juſtly doomed to the ſame puniſhment: nor is the neceſſity of ſubmitting the conſcience to human laws ſo plainly evinced, ſo clearly ſtated, or ſo generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the juſt, will always ſcruple to concur with

with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that ſtate in which there is no repentance, has converſed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compaſſion may incur from thoſe who confound cruelty with firmneſs, I know not whether any wiſe man would wiſh it leſs powerful, or leſs extenſive.

If thoſe whom the wiſdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper diſcipline and uſeful labour, have been diſentangled from their habits, they might have eſcaped all the temptations to ſubſequent crimes, and paſſed their days in reparation and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the proſecutors been certain, that their lives would have been ſpared. I believe, every thief will confeſs, that he has been more than once ſeized and diſmiſſed; and that he has ſometimes ventured upon capital crimes, becauſe he knew, that thoſe whom he injured would rather connive at his eſcape, than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws againſt wickedneſs are ineffectual, unleſs ſome will inform, and ſome will proſecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and proſecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of

puniſhing a ſlight injury with death; eſpecially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured ſafety by another crime, from which he was reſtrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to aſſiſt the exerciſe of publick juſtice are indeed ſtrong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderneſs for life. What is puniſhed with ſeverity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be ſeldom diſcovered; and multitudes will be ſuffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deſerve death, becauſe, if they had been ſooner proſecuted, they would have ſuffered death before they deſerved it.

This ſcheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedneſs by lenity, is ſo remote from common practice, that I might reaſonably fear to expoſe it to the publick, could it be ſupported only by my own obſervations: I ſhall, therefore, by aſcribing it to its author, Sir *Thomas More*, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wiſh always paid to prudence, to juſtice, and to mercy.

NUMB. 115. TUESDAY, *April* 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, ſed non toleranda maritis. JUV.
Some faults, tho' ſmall, intolerable grow. DRYDEN.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I Sit down in purſuance of my late engagement to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befel me in my long queſt of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been ſo happy as to obtain it, I have at leaſt endeavoured to deſerve by unwearied diligence, without ſuffering from repeated diſappointments any abatement of my hope or repreſſion of my activity.

You muſt have obſerved in the world a ſpecies of mortals who employ themſelves in promoting matrimony, and, without any viſible motive of intereſt or vanity, without any diſcoverable impulſe of malice or benevolence, without any reaſon, but that they want objects of attention and topicks of converſation, are inceſſantly buſy in procuring wives and huſbands. They fill the ears of every ſingle man and woman with ſome convenient match, and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner of life with the ſame readineſs, and the ſame indifference, as a ſaleſman, when he has taken meaſure by his eye, fits his cuſtomer with a coat.

It might be expected that they ſhould ſoon be diſcouraged from this officious interpoſition by reſentment or contempt; and that every man ſhould determine the choice on which ſo much of his happineſs muſt depend, by his own judgment and

obſervation: yet it happens, that as theſe propoſals are generally made with a ſhew of kindneſs, they ſeldom provoke anger, but are at worſt heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are ſure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active underſtandings they excite curioſity, and ſometimes by a lucky chance bring perſons of ſimilar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to poſſeſs a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by theſe hymeneal ſolicitors, with whoſe importunity I was ſometimes diverted, and ſometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcaſe; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own ſcheme, from the ſucceſs of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleaſure of defeating others equally eager, and equally induſtrious.

An invitation to ſup with one of thoſe buſy friends, made me by a concerted chance acquainted with *Camilla*, by whom it was expected, that I ſhould be ſuddenly and irreſiſtibly enſlaved. The lady, whom the ſame kindneſs had brought without her own concurrence into the liſts of love, ſeemed to think me at leaſt worthy of the honour of captivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with ſo much art and ſpirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myſelf irrevocably at the firſt interview, yet I could not ſuppreſs ſome raptures of admiration, and flutters of deſire. I was eaſily

perſuaded,

perſuaded to make nearer approaches; but ſoon diſcovered, that an union with *Camilla* was not much to be wiſhed. *Camilla* profeſſed a boundleſs contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own ſex; and very frequently expreſſed her wonder that men of learning or experience could ſubmit to trifle away life with beings incapable of ſolid thought. In mixed companies, ſhe always aſſociated with the men, and declared her ſatisfaction when the ladies retired. If any ſhort excurſion into the country was propoſed, ſhe commonly inſiſted upon the excluſion of women from the party; becauſe, where they were admitted, the time was waſted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To ſhew the greatneſs of her mind, ſhe avoided all compliance with the faſhion; and to boaſt the profundity of her knowledge, miſtook the various textures of ſilk, confounded tabbies with damaſks, and ſent for ribbands by wrong names. She deſpiſed the commerce of ſtated viſits, a farce of empty form without inſtruction; and congratulated herſelf, that ſhe never learned to write meſſage cards. She often applauded the noble ſentiment of *Plato*, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of *Swift*'s opinion, that women are only a higher ſpecies of monkies; and confeſſed, that when ſhe conſidered the behaviour, or heard the converſation, of her ſex, ſhe could not but forgive the *Turks* for ſuſpecting them to want ſouls.

It was the joy and pride of *Camilla* to have provoked, by this inſolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the perſecutions of calumny; nor was ſhe

ever more elevated with her own ſuperiority, than when ſhe talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, ſays ſhe, has nature provided that ſuch virulence ſhould be diſabled by folly, and ſuch cruelty be reſtrained by impotence.

Camilla doubtleſs expected, that what ſhe loſt on one ſide, ſhe ſhould gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made ſuch generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, inſtead of ſpringing forward to meet her, ſhrunk back at her approach. She was perſecuted by the ladies as a deſerter, and at beſt received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amuſed myſelf a while with her fopperies, but novelty ſoon gave way to deteſtation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedneſs of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her ſoftneſs; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entruſted to ſuch audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and ſoliciting aſſault.

My next miſtreſs was *Nitella*, a lady of gentle mien, and ſoft voice, always ſpeaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from thoſe with whom chance had brought her into company. In *Nitella* I promiſed myſelf an eaſy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without diſturbance or altercation. I therefore ſoon reſolved to addreſs her, but was diſcouraged from proſecuting my courtſhip by obſerving, that her apartments were ſuperſtitiouſly regular; and that, unleſs ſhe had notice of my viſit, ſhe was never to be ſeen. There is a kind of anxious cleanlineſs which I have

have always noted as the characteriſtick of a ſlattern; it is the ſuperfluous ſcrupuloſity of guilt, dreading diſcovery, and ſhunning ſuſpicion: it is the violence of an effort againſt habit, which being impelled by external motives, cannot ſtop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and ſeldom could forbear to diſcover, by her uneaſineſs and conſtraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engroſſed: I therefore concluded, that being only occaſionally and ambitiouſly dreſſed, ſhe was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are ſo many competitors for the fame of cleanlineſs, that it is not hard to gain information of thoſe that fail from thoſe that deſire to excel: I quickly found, that *Nitella* paſſed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and ſlippers, when ſhe was not decorated for immediate ſhew.

I was then led by my evil deſtiny to *Charybdis*, who never neglected an opportunity of ſeizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myſelf quickly made happy by permiſſion to attend her to publick places; and pleaſed my own vanity with imagining the envy which I ſhould raiſe in a thouſand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of *Charybdis*. She ſoon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which ſhe had never ſeen. I ſolicited the happineſs of accompanying her, which, after a ſhort reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curioſity in her journey, than after all poſſible means of expence; and was every moment taking occaſion to

mention ſome delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon ſuch notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, ſhe told me, whenever we met, of ſome new diverſion; at night ſhe had notice of a charming company that would breakfaſt in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of ſome new ſong in the opera, ſome new dreſs at the playhouſe, or ſome performer at a concert whom ſhe longed to hear. Her intelligence was ſuch, that there never was a ſhew, to which ſhe did not ſummon me on the ſecond day; and as ſhe hated a croud, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at ſome intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we paſſed the ſtreets, ſhe was often charmed with ſome trinket in the toy-ſhops; and from moderate deſires of ſeals and ſnuff-boxes, roſe, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the ſmile of *Charybdis* too coſtly for a private purſe, and added one more to ſix and forty lovers, whoſe fortune and patience her rapacity had exhauſted.

Imperia then took poſſeſſion of my affections; but kept them only for a ſhort time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having ſpent the early part of her life in the peruſal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of *Cleopatra*; expected nothing leſs than vows, altars, and ſacrifices; and thought her charms diſhonoured, and her power infringed, by the ſofteſt oppoſition to her ſentiments, or the ſmalleſt tranſgreſſion of her commands. Time might indeed cure this ſpecies of pride in a mind not naturally undiſcerning, and vitiated only by falſe repreſentations; but the operations of time are

ſlow;

ſlow; and I therefore left her to grow wiſe at leiſure, or to continue in error at her own expence.

Thus I have hitherto, in ſpite of myſelf, paſſed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dreſs up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the ſame excellence in corporeal beauty. But ſurely, Mr. RAMBLER, it is not madneſs to hope for ſome terreſtrial lady unſtained with the ſpots which I have been deſcribing; at leaſt I am reſolved to purſue my ſearch; for I am ſo far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the higheſt happineſs decreed to our preſent ſtate; and if after all theſe miſcarriages I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you ſhall hear once more from

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

NUMB. 116. SATURDAY, *April* 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus. HOR.

Thus the ſlow ox wou'd gaudy trappings claim;
The ſprightly horſe wou'd plough—— FRANCIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I Was the ſecond ſon of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of *London*. My father having by his marriage freed the eſtate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his ſiſters their portions, thought himſelf diſcharged from all obligation

obligation to further thought, and entitled to ſpend the reſt of his life in rural pleaſures. He therefore ſpared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the beſt guns and horſes that the kingdom could ſupply, paid large ſalaries to his groom and huntſman, and became the envy of the country for the diſcipline of his hounds. But above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and ſetting-dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he had ſo much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could reſt in ſecurity, and game of whatever ſpecies that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his ſhot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chace, and at an age when other boys are *creeping like ſnails unwillingly to ſchool*, he could wind the horn, beat the buſhes, bound over hedges, and ſwim rivers. When the huntſman one day broke his leg, he ſupplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the ſcut in his hat, amidſt the acclamations of the whole village. I being either delicate, or timorous, leſs deſirous of honour, or leſs capable of ſylvan heroiſm, was always the favourite of my mother; becauſe I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home like my brother mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horſe, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuſe herſelf with books, and being much inclined to deſpiſe the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, diſdained to learn their ſentiments or converſation, and had made no addition to the notions which ſhe

ſhe had brought from the precincts of *Cornhill*. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the ſucceſſion of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at *Guildhall*; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies feaſts by men of whom ſome are now made aldermen, ſome have fined for ſheriffs, and none are worth leſs than forty thouſand pounds. She frequently diſplayed her father's greatneſs; told of the large bills which he had paid at ſight; of the ſums for which his word would paſs upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he uſed on *Saturday* night to toſs about with a ſhovel; the extent of his warehouſe, and the ſtrength of his doors; and when ſhe relaxed her imagination with lower ſubjects, deſcribed the furniture of their country-houſe, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By theſe narratives I was fired with the ſplendor and dignity of *London*, and of trade. I therefore devoted myſelf to a ſhop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with enquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholeſale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother aſſured me that many had arrived who began the world with leſs than myſelf.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to ſuch honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure ſome repreſſion of my eagerneſs, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man ſeldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty*. They thought it neceſſary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that

that of learning merchants accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapſed, I was tranſplanted to town, and, with great ſatisfaction to myſelf, bound to a haberdaſher.

My maſter, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally ariſe from a cloſe and unwearied attention to the main chance; his deſire to gain wealth was ſo well tempered by the vanity of ſhewing it, that without any other principle of action, he lived in the eſteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with reſpect by the only men, whoſe good opinion he valued or ſolicited, thoſe who were univerſally allowed to be richer than himſelf.

By his inſtructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and ſoon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter bow, the careleſs air with which a ſmall pair of ſcales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and ſprightlineſs with which the box, after the ribband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no deſire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly maſter of all that could be known, became a critick in ſmall wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was ſometimes conſulted by the weavers when they projected faſhions for the enſuing ſpring.

With

With all theſe accompliſhments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeſhip, I paid a viſit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and conſulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a maſter of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But unhappily at the firſt publick table to which I was invited, appeared a ſtudent of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a ſmile of contempt, which deſtroyed at once all my hopes of diſtinction, ſo that I durſt hardly raiſe my eyes for fear of encountering their ſuperiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of diſplaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with hiſtorical narratives, and political obſervations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of aſſemblies, gardens, and diverſions. I, indeed, eſſayed to fill up a pauſe in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade, and *Spaniards*; and once attempted, with ſome warmth, to correct a groſs miſtake about a ſilver breaſt-knot; but neither of my antagoniſts ſeemed to think a reply neceſſary; they reſumed their diſcourſe without emotion, and again engroſſed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear deſirous to know my opinion of her dreſs, or to hear how long the carnation ſhot with white, that was then new amongſt them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of theſe gentlemen had more money than myſelf, I could not diſcover what had depreſſed me in their preſence; nor why

why they were conſidered by others as more worthy of attention and reſpect; and therefore reſolved, when we met again, to rouſe my ſpirit, and force myſelf into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a ſmall circle very ſucceſsfully with a minute repreſentation of my lord mayor's ſhow, when the colonel entered careleſs and gay, ſat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the ſame attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language; and by one or other the company was ſo happily amuſed, that I was neither heard nor ſeen, nor was able to give any other proof of my exiſtence than that I put round the glaſs, and was in my turn permitted to name the toaſt.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps theſe ſhowy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket needs not care what any man ſays of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and ſoldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purſe; and that it is fine, when a man can ſet his hands to his ſides, and ſay he is worth forty thouſand pounds every day of the year. Theſe and many more ſuch conſolations and encouragements, I received from my good mother, which however did not much allay my uneaſineſs; for having by ſome accident heard, that the country ladies deſpiſed her as a cit, I had there-

fore

fore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but conſidered her as one whoſe ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a ſtate of meanneſs and ignominy, from which I could not find any poſſibility of riſing to the rank which my anceſtors had always held.

I returned, however, to my maſter, and buſied myſelf among thread, and ſilks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulneſs and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact diſpoſition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the gloſſy blackneſs of my ſhoes; nor heard with my former elevation thoſe compliments which ladies ſometimes condeſcended to pay me upon my readineſs in twiſting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *Young man*, with which I was ſometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my perſon, and ſullen in my temper, often miſtook the demands of the cuſtomers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and diſmiſſed them with ſurly ſilence.

My maſter was afraid leſt the ſhop ſhould ſuffer by this change of my behaviour; and, therefore, after ſome expoſtulations, poſted me in the warehouſe, and preſerved me from the danger and reproach of deſertion, to which my diſcontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the ſixth year of my ſervitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I

was

was now heir, and with the hearty conſent of my maſter commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me ſhall be communicated in another letter, by, Sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

NUMB. 117. TUESDAY, *April* 30, 1751.

Ὄσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη. HOMER.

The gods they challenge, and affect the ſkies:
Heav'd on *Olympus* tott'ring *Oſſa* ſtood;
On *Oſſa*, *Pelion* nods with all his wood. POPE.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the diſpoſition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All induſtry muſt be excited by hope; and as the ſtudent often propoſes no other reward to himſelf than praiſe, he is eaſily diſcouraged by contempt and inſult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluſe ſpeculation, and has never hardened his front in publick life, or accuſtomed his paſſions to the viciſſitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed converſation, will bluſh at the ſtare of petulant incredulity, and ſuffer himſelf to be driven, by a burſt of laughter, from the fortreſſes of demonſtration. The mechaniſt will be afraid

to

to aſſert before hardy contradiction, the poſſibility of tearing down bulwarks with a ſilk-worm's thread; and the aſtronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the diſtance of the fixed ſtars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have ſhaken off this cowardice, I had not ſheltered myſelf under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the publick the theory of a garret; a ſubject which, except ſome ſlight and tranſient ſtrictures, has been hitherto neglected by thoſe who were beſt qualified to adorn it, either for want of leiſure to proſecute the various reſearches in which a nice diſcuſſion muſt engage them, or becauſe it requires ſuch diverſity of knowledge, and ſuch extent of curioſity, as is ſcarcely to be found in any ſingle intellect: or perhaps others foreſaw the tumults which would be raiſed againſt them, and confined their knowledge to their own breaſts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the profeſſors of literature generally reſide in the higheſt ſtories, has been immemorially obſerved. The wiſdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated ſituation: why elſe were the *Muſes* ſtationed on *Olympus* or *Parnaſſus* by thoſe who could with equal right have raiſed them bowers in the vale of *Tempe*, or erected their altars among the flexures of *Meander*? Why was *Jove* himſelf nurſed upon a mountain? or why did the goddeſſes, when the prize of beauty was conteſted, try the cauſe upon the top of *Ida*? Such were the fictions by which the great maſters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to poſterity the importance

portance of a garret, which, though they had been long obſcured by the negligence and ignorance of ſucceeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated ſymbol of *Pythagoras*, ἀνεμῶν πνεόντων τὴν ἠχὼ προσκύνει; "when the wind blows, "worſhip its echo." This could not but be underſtood by his diſciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently viſited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of *Auguſtus*, for *Tibullus* evidently congratulates himſelf upon his garret, not without ſome alluſion to the *Pythagorean* precept.

Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem——
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cùm fuderit auſter,
Securum ſomnos, imbre juvante, ſequi!

How ſweet in ſleep to paſs the careleſs hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and daſhing ſhow'rs!

And it is impoſſible not to diſcover the fondneſs of *Lucretius*, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his deſcription of the lofty towers of ſerene learning, and of the pleaſure with which a wiſe man looks down upon the confuſed and erratick ſtate of the world moving below him.

Sed nil dulcius eſt, bene quàm munita tenere
Editâ doctrinâ ſapientum templa ſerena;
Deſpicere unde queas alios, paſſimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.

——'Tis ſweet thy lab'ring ſteps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wiſdom well ſupply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortify'd:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind. DRYDEN.

The inſtitution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is ſtill the uſual receptacle of the philoſopher and poet; but this, like many ancient cuſtoms, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reaſon for which it was eſtabliſhed.

Cauſa latet; res eſt notiſſima.

The cauſe is ſecret, but th' effect is known. ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning theſe habitations of literature, but without much ſatisfaction to the judicious enquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally choſen by the wits, as moſt eaſily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others ſuſpect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the houſe from the outer door, which is often obſerved to be infeſted by viſitants, who talk inceſſantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the ſame ſounds every morning, and ſometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raiſe their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotomy is always deteſtable to a man whoſe chief pleaſure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noiſe, and abſtraction from common buſineſs or amuſements; and ſome yet more viſionary, tell us that the faculties are enlarged by open proſpects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

Theſe

Theſe conveniencies may perhaps all be found in a well-choſen garret; but ſurely they cannot be ſuppoſed ſufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, diſtant ages, and ſeparate nations. Of an univerſal practice, there muſt ſtill be preſumed an univerſal cauſe, which, however recondite and abſtruſe, may be perhaps reſerved to make me illuſtrious by its diſcovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is univerſally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the ſtate of the body, and that the body is in a great meaſure regulated by the various compreſſions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of *Hippocrates*; but no man has yet ſufficiently conſidered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords inſtances of local underſtanding, of wits and reaſoners, whoſe faculties are adapted to ſome ſingle ſpot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, ſink at once into ſilence and ſtupidity. I have diſcovered, by a long ſeries of obſervations, that invention and elocution ſuffer great impediments from denſe and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper diſtance from the ſurface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and ſets at liberty thoſe intellectual powers which were before ſhackled by too ſtrong attraction, and unable to expand themſelves under the preſſure of a groſs atmoſphere. I have found dulneſs to quicken into ſentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhauſted; and heads in appearance empty have teemed with

notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropicks are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes

a wiſe man to ſtruggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteneſs are requiſite, we muſt actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the center in a garret.

If you imagine that I aſcribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I deſire you to conſult your own memory, and conſider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the firſt floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of underſtanding till he was reſtored to his original ſituation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from ſuppoſing; I know there are ſome who would continue blockheads even on the ſummit of the *Andes*, or on the peak of *Teneriffe*. But let not any man be conſidered as unimproveable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of *Aretæus* was rational in no other place but his own ſhop.

I think a frequent removal to various diſtances from the center, ſo neceſſary to a juſt eſtimate of intellectual abilities, and conſequently of ſo great uſe in education, that if I hoped that the publick could be perſuaded to ſo expenſive an experiment, I would propoſe, that there ſhould be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like thoſe which *Bacon* deſcribes in *Solomon*'s houſe, for the expanſion and concentration of underſtanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or conſtitutions. Perhaps ſome that fume away in meditations upon time and ſpace in the tower, might compoſe tables of intereſt at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground ſtagnates in ſilence, or creeps

creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, ſparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addiſon obſerves, that we may find the heat of *Virgil*'s climate, in ſome lines of his *Georgick*: ſo, when I read a compoſition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly ſaid to ſmell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a ſprightly ſally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it freſh from the garret; an expreſſion which would break from me upon the peruſal of moſt of your papers, did I not believe, that you ſometimes quit the garret, and aſcend into the cock-loft. HYPERTATUS.

NUMB. 118. SATURDAY, *May* 4, 1751.

——Omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte. HOR.

In endleſs night they ſleep, unwept, unknown. FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his uſual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of *Scipio*, to depreciate thoſe honours for which he himſelf appears to have panted with reſtleſs ſolicitude, by ſhewing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope from men is circumſcribed.

"You ſee," ſays *Africanus*, pointing at the earth from the celeſtial regions, "that the globe aſſigned "to the reſidence and habitation of human be-"ings is of ſmall dimenſions: how then can

"you obtain from the praiſe of men, any glory "worthy of a wiſh? Of this little world the inha- "bited parts are neither numerous nor wide; "even the ſpots where men are to be found are "broken by intervening deſerts; and the nations "are ſo ſeparated as that nothing can be tranſ- "mitted from one to another. With the people "of the ſouth, by whom the oppoſite part of the "earth is poſſeſſed, you have no intercourſe; and "by how ſmall a tract do you communicate with "the countries of the north? The territory which "you inhabit is no more than a ſcanty iſland in- "cloſed by a ſmall body of water, to which you "give the name of the great ſea, and the *Atlan- "tick* ocean. And even in this known and fre- "quented continent, what hope can you enter- "tain, that your renown will paſs the ſtream of "*Ganges*, or the cliffs of *Caucaſus*? or by whom "will your name be uttered in the extremities of "the north or ſouth, towards the riſing or the ſet- "ting ſun? So narrow is the ſpace to which your "fame can be propagated, and even there how "long will it remain?"

He then proceeds to aſſign natural cauſes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but ſhort in its duration; he obſerves the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares, that according to the celeſtial chronology, no human honours can laſt a ſingle year.

Such are the objections by which *Tully* has made a ſhew of diſcouraging the purſuit of fame; objections which ſufficiently diſcover his tenderneſs and regard for his darling phantom. *Homer*, when the plan of his poem made the death of *Patroclus* neceſſary, reſolved, at leaſt, that he ſhould die with honour;

honour; and therefore brought down againſt him the patron god of *Troy*, and left to *Hector* only the mean taſk of giving the laſt blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had diſabled from reſiſtance. Thus *Tully* ennobles fame, which he profeſſes to degrade, by oppoſing it to celeſtial happineſs; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by repreſenting it ſmall in the eſtimation of ſuperior beings. He ſtill admits it the higheſt and nobleſt of terreſtrial objects, and alleges little more againſt it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of theſe obſervations conveyed in *Ciceronian* eloquence to *Roman* underſtandings, cannot be determined; but few of thoſe who ſhall in the preſent age read my humble verſion will find themſelves much depreſſed in their hopes, or retarded in their deſigns; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us paſs their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquiſition of power, have very anxiouſly enquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the *Ganges*, or invigorated any effort by the deſire of ſpreading their renown among the clans of *Caucaſus*. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compaſs; a ſingle nation, and a few years, have generally ſufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little conſideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happineſs in the frequent repetition of his name, may ſpend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or neceſſity of paſſing the *Atlantick* ſea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greateſt power, or moſt active diligence, are inconſiderable; and where neither benefit nor miſchief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curioſity; a paſſion, which, though in ſome degree univerſally aſſociated to reaſon, is eaſily confined, overborn, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower claſſes of mankind, there will be found very little deſire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of ſome preſſing uneaſineſs, or the attainment of ſome near advantage. The *Turks* are ſaid to hear with wonder a propoſal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and enquire, why any man ſhould labour for nothing: ſo thoſe whoſe condition has always reſtrained them to the contemplation of their own neceſſities, and who have been accuſtomed to look forward only to a ſmall diſtance, will ſcarcely underſtand, why nights and days ſhould be ſpent in ſtudies, which end in new ſtudies, and which, according to *Malherbe*'s obſervation, do not tend to leſſen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer eaſily be perſuaded, that much pleaſure can ariſe from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in diſtant times; or that any thing can deſerve their enquiry, of which κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any conſequences.

The truth is, that very few have leiſure from indiſpenſable buſineſs, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among thoſe to whom

whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themſelves engagements, by the indulgence of ſome petty ambition, the admiſſion of ſome inſatiable deſire, or the toleration of ſome predominant paſſion. The man whoſe whole wiſh is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect intereſt, to eſtimate ſecurities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover diſdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of *Corinna*; and the courtier thinks the hour loſt, which is not ſpent in promoting his intereſt, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the diſcoveries of ſcience, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention thus buſy with its favourite amuſement, and impatient of interruption or diſturbance.

But not only ſuch employments as ſeduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promiſes of happineſs, may reſtrain the mind from excurſion and enquiry; curioſity may be equally deſtroyed by leſs formidable enemies; it may be diſſipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The ſportſman and the man of dreſs have their heads filled with a fox or a horſe-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beſide, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or ſolicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and ſome yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleaſure or buſineſs, without joy or ſorrow, nor ever rouſe from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of thoſe who have dedicated themſelves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curioſity to a few objects, and have very little

inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own ſtudies entitle them to partake. The naturaliſt has no deſire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botaniſt looks upon the aſtronomer as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer ſcarcely hears the name of a phyſician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praiſes, ſhall ſubduct from the number of his encomiaſts, all thoſe who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the vallies of life no voice but that of neceſſity; all thoſe who imagine themſelves too important to regard him, and conſider the mention of his name as an uſurpation of their time; all who are too much, or too little, pleaſed with themſelves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleaſure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different purſuits; and all who ſlumber in univerſal negligence; he will find his renown ſtraitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of *Caucaſus*, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a ſmall part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languiſh in our endeavours after excellence, it is neceſſary, that, as *Africanus* counſels his deſcendant, "we raiſe our eyes to "higher proſpects, and contemplate our future "and eternal ſtate, without giving up our hearts "to the praiſe of crouds, or fixing our hopes on "ſuch rewards as human power can beſtow."

NUMB. 119. TUESDAY, *May* 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra. HOR.

Faults lay on either ſide the *Trojan* tow'rs. ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS, notwithſtanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to ſuggeſt, men and women muſt at laſt paſs their lives together, I have never therefore thought thoſe writers friends to human happineſs, who endeavour to excite in either ſex a general contempt or ſuſpicion of the other. To perſuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a ſuitable aſſociate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who truſt are certainly betrayed, and they who eſteem are always diſappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Thoſe who are convinced, that no reaſon for preference can be found, will never harraſs their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will reſolve, ſince they are doomed to miſery, that no needleſs anxiety ſhall diſturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the croud, and ſnatch the firſt hand that ſhall be held toward them.

That the world is overrun with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally eſcape a greater evil by ſuffering a leſs; and therefore, thoſe who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the know-

ledge of life, ſhould be careful to inculcate the poſſibility of virtue and happineſs, and to encourage endeavours by proſpects of ſucceſs.

You, perhaps, do not ſuſpect, that theſe are the ſentiments of one who has been ſubject for many years to all the hardſhips of antiquated virginity; has been long accuſtomed to the coldneſs of neglect, and the petulance of inſult; has been mortified in full aſſemblies by enquiries after forgotten faſhions, games long diſuſed, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the ſecond wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquets in whiſpers intended to be heard; and been long conſidered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wiſe for pleaſure. It is indeed natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual aſperity; yet I have hitherto ſtruggled with ſo much vigilance againſt my pride, and my reſentment, that I have preſerved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect ſentences againſt marriage; nor am inclined to leſſen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obſtructing that happineſs which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in cenſures of the forwardneſs and indiſcretion of girls, or the inconſtancy, taſteleſſneſs, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by neceſſity, but induced by obſervation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the

the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, ſwells ſome of thoſe hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to ſolitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor paſſed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtſhip, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidſt the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applauſe; been attended from pleaſure to pleaſure by the great, the ſprightly, and the vain; and ſeen my regard ſolicited by the obſequiouſneſs of galantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a ſtranger to nuptial happineſs, I ſuffer only the conſequences of my own reſolves, and can look back upon the ſucceſſion of lovers, whoſe addreſſes I have rejected, without grief and without malice.

When my name firſt began to be inſcribed upon glaſſes, I was honoured with the amorous profeſſions of the gay *Venuſtulus*, a gentleman, who, being the only ſon of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonneſs of expence, and ſoftneſs of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his perſon, and eaſy in his addreſs, and, therefore, ſoon gained upon my eye at an age when the ſight is very little over-ruled by the underſtanding. He had not any power in himſelf of gladdening or amuſing; but ſupplied his want of converſation by treats and diverſions; and his chief art of courtſhip was to fill the mind of his miſtreſs with parties, rambles, muſick, and ſhews. We were often engaged in ſhort excurſions to gardens and ſeats, and I was for a while pleaſed with the care which *Venuſtulus* diſcovered in ſe-

curing me from any appearance of danger or poſſibility of miſchance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promiſe the waterman a reward if he landed us ſafe; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary ſolicitude was repreſented for a time as the effect of his tenderneſs for me; but fear is too ſtrong for continued hypocriſy. I ſoon diſcovered, that *Veneſtulus* had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could ſcarcely refrain from ſcreams and outcries at any accidental ſurprize. He durſt not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainſcot, nor croſs a field where the cattle were friſking in the ſunſhine; the leaſt breeze that waved upon the river was a ſtorm, and every clamour in the ſtreet was a cry of fire. I have ſeen him loſe his colour when my ſquirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the ſudden entrance of a black cat. Compaſſion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in diſtreſs, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own eſcape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a huſband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refuſing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unneceſſary fears, and flown to me for that ſuccour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was *Fungoſa*, the ſon of a ſtock-jobber, whoſe viſits my friends, by the importunity of perſuaſion, prevailed upon me to allow. *Fungoſa* was no very ſuitable companion; for, having

having been bred in a counting-houſe, he ſpoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no deſire of any reputation, but that of an acute prognoſticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raiſing merriment, but by telling how ſomebody was overreached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great ſobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haſte to conclude the match, but was ſo much awed by my parents, that I durſt not diſmiſs him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the groſſneſs of pedlary, and the jargon of uſury, had not a fraud been diſcovered in the ſettlement, which ſet me free from the perſecution of groveling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards ſix months without any particular notice, but at laſt became the idol of the glittering *Floſculus*, who preſcribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleaſure the cock of every hat, and the ſleeve of every coat, that appeared in faſhionable aſſemblies. *Floſculus* made ſome impreſſion upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my ſkill in dreſs, my judgment in ſuiting colours, and my art in diſpoſing ornaments. But *Floſculus* was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be ſufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to pleaſe with varied praiſe an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and ſtaid away three days, becauſe I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that *Floſculus* was rather a rival than

than an admirer; and that we ſhould probably live in a perpetual ſtruggle of emulous finery, and ſpend our lives in ſtratagems to be firſt in the faſhion.

I had ſoon after the honour at a feaſt of attracting the eyes of *Dentatus*, one of thoſe human beings whoſe only happineſs is to dine. *Dentatus* regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of meaſures that he had laid for procuring the beſt cook in *France*, and entertained me with bills of fare, preſcribed the arrangement of diſhes, and taught me two ſawces invented by himſelf. At length, ſuch is the uncertainty of human happineſs, I declared my opinion too haſtily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew ſo cold and negligent, that he was eaſily diſmiſſed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead a while in triumph. But two of them I drove from me by diſcovering, that they had no taſte or knowledge in muſick; three I diſmiſſed, becauſe they were drunkards; two, becauſe they paid their addreſſes at the ſame time to other ladies; and ſix, becauſe they attempted to influence my choice, by bribing my maid. Two more I diſcarded at the ſecond viſit, for obſcene alluſions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I ſentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me ſettlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for repreſenting falſely the value of their eſtates; three for concealing their debts; and one, for raiſing the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have

I have now ſent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppoſe to the tale of *Hymenæus*. I mean not to depreciate the ſex which has produced poets and philoſophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not ſuffer the riſing generation of beauties to be dejected by partial ſatire; or to imagine, that thoſe who cenſured them have not likewiſe their follies, and their vices. I do not yet believe happineſs unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inſeparable union. It is neceſſary to expoſe faults, that their deformity may be ſeen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either ſex to be condemned, becauſe ſome women, or men, are indelicate, or diſhoneſt.

I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

NUMB. 120. SATURDAY, *May* 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri ſolio Phraaten,
Diſſidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus: populumque falſis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus. Hor.

True virtue can the croud unteach
Their falſe miſtaken forms of ſpeech;
Virtue to crouds a foe profeſt,
Diſdains to number with the bleſt
Phraates, by his ſlaves ador'd,
And to the *Parthian* crown reſtor'd. FRANCIS.

IN the reign of *Jenghiz Can*, conqueror of the eaſt, in the city of *Samarcand*, lived *Nouradin* the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of *India* for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouſes were filled with all the commodities of the remoteſt nations; every rarity of nature, every curioſity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was uſeful, haſted to his hand. The ſtreets were crouded with his carriages; the ſea was covered with his ſhips; the ſtreams of *Oxus* were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the ſky wafted wealth to *Nouradin*.

At length *Nouradin* felt himſelf ſeized with a ſlow malady, which he firſt endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his ſtrength every day leſs, he was at laſt terrified, and called for help upon the ſages of phyſick; they filled his apartments with alexipharmicks, reſtoratives, and eſſential virtues; the pearls of the ocean

ocean were diſſolved, the ſpices of *Arabia* were diſtilled, and all the powers of nature were employed, to give new ſpirits to his nerves, and new balſam to his blood. *Nouradin* was for ſome time amuſed with promiſes, invigorated with cordials, or ſoothed with anodynes; but the diſeaſe preyed upon his vitals, and he ſoon diſcovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deſerted by his phyſicians, and rarely viſited by his friends; but his unwillingneſs to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having paſſed the night in tedious languor, he called to him *Almamoulin*, his only ſon; and diſmiſſing his attendants, "My ſon," ſays he, "behold here the weakneſs and fragi-"lity of man; look backward a few days, thy "father was great and happy, freſh as the ver-"nal roſe, and ſtrong as the cedar of the moun-"tain; the nations of *Aſia* drank his dews, "and art and commerce delighted in his ſhade. "Malevolence beheld me, and ſighed: His "root, ſhe cried, is fixed in the depths; it is "watered by the fountains of *Oxus*; it ſends out "branches afar, and bids defiance to the blaſt; "prudence reclines againſt his trunk, and proſ-"perity dances on his top. Now, *Almamoulin*, "look upon me withering and proſtrate; look "upon me and attend. I have trafficked, I have "proſpered, I have rioted in gain; my houſe is "ſplendid, my ſervants are numerous; yet I "diſplayed only a ſmall part of my riches; the "reſt, which I was hindered from enjoying by "the fear of raiſing envy, or tempting rapacity, "I have piled in towers, I have buried in ca-

"verns,

"verns, I have hidden in ſecret repoſitories, "which this ſcroll will diſcover. My purpoſe "was, after ten months more ſpent in com- "merce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a "ſafer country; to have given ſeven years to de- "light and feſtivity, and the remaining part of "my days to ſolitude and repentance; but the "hand of death is upon me; a frigorifick tor- "por encroaches upon my veins; I am now "leaving the produce of my toil, which it muſt "be thy buſineſs to enjoy with wiſdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled *Nouradin* with ſuch grief, that he fell into convulſions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched a while with honeſt ſorrow, and ſat two hours in profound meditation, without peruſing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborn with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new poſſeſſions, which ſwelled his heart with ſuch tranſports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now ſufficiently compoſed to order a funeral of modeſt magnificence, ſuitable at once to the rank of *Nouradin*'s profeſſion, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he ſpent in viſiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treaſures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expences of other young men: he therefore believed, that happineſs was now in his power, ſince he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accuſtomed to regret the want.

He

He reſolved to give a looſe to his deſires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneaſineſs no more.

He immediately procured a ſplendid equipage, dreſſed his ſervants in rich embroidery, and covered his horſes with golden capariſons. He ſhowered down ſilver on the populace, and ſuffered their acclamations to ſwell him with inſolence. The nobles ſaw him with anger, the wiſe men of the ſtate combined againſt him, the leaders of armies threatened his deſtruction. *Almamoulin* was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the preſence of his enemies, and appeaſed them with gold, and gems, and ſupplication.

He then ſought to ſtrengthen himſelf, by an alliance with the princes of *Tartary*, and offered the price of kingdoms, for a wife of noble birth. His ſuit was generally rejected, and his preſents refuſed; but a princeſs of *Aſtracan* once condeſcended to admit him to her preſence. She received him ſitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and ſhining with the jewels of *Golconda*; command ſparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. *Almamoulin* approached and trembled. She ſaw his confuſion, and diſdained him: How, ſays ſhe, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus ſhrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in ſordid oſtentation; thou waſt born to be wealthy, but never canſt be great.

He then contracted his deſires to more private and domeſtick pleaſures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land,

he

he tranſplanted foreſts, he levelled mountains, opened proſpects into diſtant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

Theſe amuſements pleaſed him for a time; but languor and wearineſs ſoon invaded him. His bowers loſt their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchaſed large tracts of land in diſtant provinces, adorned them with houſes of pleaſure, and diverſified them with accommodations for different ſeaſons. Change of place at firſt relieved his ſatiety, but all the novelties of ſituation were ſoon exhauſted; he found his heart vacant, and his deſires, for want of external objects, ravaging himſelf.

He therefore returned to *Samarcand*, and ſet open his doors to thoſe whom idleneſs ſends out in ſearch of pleaſure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage ſparkled in his bowls, and his lamps ſcattered perfumes. The ſound of the lute, and the voice of the ſinger, chaſed away ſadneſs; every hour was crouded with pleaſure; and the day ended and began with feaſts and dances, and revelry and merriment. *Almamoulin* cried out, "I have "at laſt found the uſe of riches; I am ſur- "rounded by companions, who view my great- "neſs without envy; and I enjoy at once the "raptures of popularity, and the ſafety of an "obſcure ſtation. What trouble can he feel, "whom all are ſtudious to pleaſe, that they may "be repaid with pleaſure? What danger can he "dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of *Almamoulin*, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay aſſem-

bly,

bly, regaling at his expence; but in the midſt of this ſoliloquy, an officer of juſtice entered the houſe, and, in the form of legal citation, ſummoned *Almamoulin* to appear before the emperor. The gueſts ſtood awhile aghaſt, then ſtole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a ſingle voice to witneſs his integrity. He now found one of his moſt frequent viſitants accuſing him of treaſon in hopes of ſharing his confiſcation; yet, unpatronized and unſupported, he cleared himſelf by the openneſs of innocence, and the conſiſtence of truth; he was diſmiſſed with honour, and his accuſer periſhed in priſon.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reaſon he had hoped for juſtice or fidelity from thoſe who live only to gratify their ſenſes; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitleſs reſearches after felicity, he had recourſe to a ſage, who, after ſpending his youth in travel and obſervation, had retired from all human cares, to a ſmall habitation on the banks of *Oxus*, where he converſed only with ſuch as ſolicited his counſel. "Brother," ſaid the philoſopher, "thou "haſt ſuffered thy reaſon to be deluded by idle "hopes, and fallacious appearances. Having "long looked with deſire upon riches, thou hadſt "taught thyſelf to think them more valuable "than nature deſigned them, and to expect "from them, what experience has now taught "thee, that they cannot give. That they do "not confer wiſdom, thou mayeſt be convinced, "by conſidering at how dear a price they tempted "thee, upon thy firſt entrance into the world, "to purchaſe the empty ſound of vulgar accla-"mation. That they cannot beſtow fortitude

"or

"or magnanimity, that man may be certain, "who ſtood trembling at *Aſtracan*, before a being "not naturally ſuperior to himſelf. That they "will not ſupply unexhauſted pleaſure, the re-"collection of forſaken palaces, and neglected "gardens, will eaſily inform thee. That they "rarely purchaſe friends, thou didſt ſoon diſcover, "when thou wert left to ſtand thy trial uncoun-"tenanced and alone. Yet think not riches uſe-"leſs; there are purpoſes, to which a wiſe man "may be delighted to apply them; they may, by "a rational diſtribution to thoſe who want them, "eaſe the pains of helpleſs diſeaſe, ſtill the throbs "of reſtleſs anxiety, relieve innocence from op-"preſſion, and raiſe imbecility to cheerfulneſs "and vigour. This they will enable thee to "perform, and this will afford the only happineſs "ordained for our preſent ſtate, the confidence "of divine favour, and the hope of future "rewards."

NUMB. 121. TUESDAY, *May* 14, 1751.

O imitatores, ſervum pecus! HOR.

Away, ye imitators, ſervile herd! ELPHINSTON.

I Have been informed by a letter, from one of the univerſities, that among the youth from whom the next ſwarm of reaſoners is to learn philoſophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and ſonnets, there are many, who, inſtead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themſelves with the ſecondary

ſecondary knowledge, which a convenient bench in a coffee-houſe can ſupply; and, without any examination or diſtinction, adopt the criticiſms and remarks, which happen to drop from thoſe, who have riſen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

Theſe humble retailers of knowledge my correſpondent ſtigmatizes with the name of *Echoes*; and ſeems deſirous, that they ſhould be made aſhamed of lazy ſubmiſſion, and animated to attempts after new diſcoveries, and original ſentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and ſevere. For, as they ſeldom comprehend at once all the conſequences of a poſition, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reaſoners are reſtrained from confidence, they form their concluſions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarraſs the queſtion, they expect to find their own opinion univerſally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and heſitation to want of honeſty, rather than of knowledge. I may perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correſpondent, when it ſhall be found, that I have no inclination to perſecute theſe collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the ſeverity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by haſty cenſure, I ſhall not be afraid of taking into protection thoſe whom I think condemned without a ſufficient knowledge of their cauſe.

He that adopts the ſentiments of another, whom he has reaſon to believe wiſer than himſelf, is only to be blamed, when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive

deceive the world into praiſe and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper buſineſs of youth; and whether we increaſe our knowledge by books or by converſation, we are equally indebted to foreign aſſiſtance.

The greater part of ſtudents are not born with abilities to conſtruct ſyſtems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the ſchools of art, of being able to comprehend what others diſcover, and to remember what others teach. Even thoſe to whom Providence hath allotted greater ſtrength of underſtanding, can expect only to improve a ſingle ſcience. In every other part of learning, they muſt be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can ſeldom add more than ſome ſmall particle of knowledge, to the hereditary ſtock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thouſand intellects.

In ſcience, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than ſuch as ariſes from new methods of diſtribution, or new arts of illuſtration, the neceſſity of following the traces of our predeceſſors is indiſputably evident; but there appears no reaſon, why imagination ſhould be ſubject to the ſame reſtraint. It might be conceived, that of thoſe who profeſs to forſake the narrow paths of truth every one may deviate towards a different point, ſince though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diverſified. The roads of ſcience are narrow, ſo that they who travel them, muſt either follow or meet one another; but in the boundleſs regions

gions of poſſibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are ſurely a thouſand receſſes unexplored, a thouſand flowers unplucked, a thouſand fountains unexhauſted, combinations of imagery yet unobſerved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto deſcribed.

Yet, whatever hope may perſuade, or reaſon evince, experience can boaſt of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of *Troy*, and the travels of *Ulyſſes*, have furniſhed almoſt all ſucceeding poets with incidents, characters, and ſentiments. The *Romans* are confeſſed to have attempted little more than to diſplay in their own tongue the inventions of the *Greeks*. There is, in all their writings, ſuch a perpetual recurrence of alluſions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they muſt be confeſſed often to want that power of giving pleaſure which novelty ſupplies; nor can we wonder, that they excelled ſo much in the graces of diction, when we conſider how rarely they were employed in ſearch of new thoughts.

The warmeſt admirers of the great *Mantuan* poet can extol him for little more than the ſkill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the *Iliad* and the *Odyſſey* in one compoſition: yet his judgment was perhaps ſometimes overborn by his avarice of the *Homeric* treaſures; and, for fear of ſuffering a ſparkling ornament to be loſt, he has inſerted it where it cannot ſhine with its original ſplendor.

When *Ulyſſes* viſited the infernal regions, he found, among the heroes that periſhed at *Troy*, his competitor *Ajax*, who, when the arms of *Achilles* were adjudged to *Ulyſſes*, died by his own hand in

the madneſs of diſappointment. He ſtill appeared to reſent, as on earth, his loſs and diſgrace. *Ulyſſes* endeavoured to pacify him with praiſes and ſubmiſſion; but *Ajax* walked away without reply. This paſſage has always been conſidered as eminently beautiful; becauſe *Ajax*, the haughty chief, the unlettered ſoldier, of unſhaken courage, of immoveable conſtancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his aſſertions by any other argument than the ſword, had no way of making his anger known, but by gloomy ſullenneſs and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally ſhewn by ſilence more contemptuous and piercing than any words that ſo rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was ſuperior.

When *Æneas* is ſent by *Virgil* to the ſhades, he meets *Dido* the queen of *Carthage*, whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accoſts her with tenderneſs and excuſes; but the lady turns away like *Ajax* in mute diſdain. She turns away like *Ajax*, but ſhe reſembles him in none of thoſe qualities which gave either dignity or propriety to ſilence. She might, without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burſt out like other injured women into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but *Virgil* had his imagination full of *Ajax*, and therefore could not prevail on himſelf to teach *Dido* any other mode of reſentment.

If *Virgil* could be thus ſeduced by imitation, there will be little hope, that common wits ſhould eſcape; and accordingly we find, that beſides the

univerſal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular ſpecies of fiction. At one time all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was ſeen but in a viſion; at one period all the poets followed ſheep, and every event produced a paſtoral; at another they buſied themſelves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed eaſy to conceive why any faſhion ſhould become popular, by which idleneſs is favoured, and imbecility aſſiſted; but ſurely no man of genius can much applaud himſelf for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two ſchemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the preſent time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of ſenſe to all the rhymes which our language can ſupply to ſome word, that makes the burden of the ſtanza; but this, as it has been only uſed in a kind of amorous burleſque, can ſcarcely be cenſured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of *Spenſer*, which, by the influence of ſome men of learning and genius, ſeems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deſerves to be more attentively conſidered.

To imitate the fictions and ſentiments of *Spenſer* can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the moſt pleaſing vehicles of inſtruction. But I am very far from extending the ſame reſpect to his diction or his ſtanza. His ſtile was in his own time allowed to be vicious, ſo darkened with old words and peculiarities of phraſe, and ſo remote from common uſe, that *Johnſon* boldly pronounces

him *to have written no language*. His ſtanza is at once difficult and unpleaſing; tireſome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at firſt formed in imitation of the *Italian* poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The *Italians* have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive ſuch a ſtanza as might admit the greateſt number of ſimilar rhymes; but our words end with ſo much diverſity, that it is ſeldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the ſame ſound together. If it be juſtly obſerved by *Milton*, that rhyme obliges poets to expreſs their thoughts in improper terms, theſe improprieties muſt always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increaſed by long concatenations.

The imitators of *Spenſer* are indeed not very rigid cenſors of themſelves, for they ſeem to conclude, that when they have disfigured their lines with a few obſolete ſyllables, they have accompliſhed their deſign, without conſidering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced ſince the time of *Spenſer*, as the character of *Hector* is violated by quoting *Ariſtotle* in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phraſes, though it is eaſy to ſprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the ſtile of *Spenſer* might by long labour be juſtly copied; but life is ſurely given us for higher purpoſes than to gather what our anceſtors have wiſely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but becauſe it has been forgotten.

I

NUMB. 122. SATURDAY, *May* 18, 1751.

Neſcio qua natale ſolum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit. OVID.

By ſecret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more ſubject to miſtake and diſappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the eaſineſs or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performance of others, or from abſtracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done ſkilfully appears to be done with eaſe; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vaniſhes from obſervation. We are therefore more powerfully excited to emulation, by thoſe who have attained the higheſt degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with leaſt reaſon hope to equal.

In adjuſting the probability of ſucceſs by a previous conſideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourſelves. It is never eaſy, nor often poſſible, to compriſe the ſeries of any proceſs, with all its circumſtances, incidents, and variations, in a ſpeculative ſcheme. Experience ſoon ſhews us the tortuoſities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of ſimplicity, and the aſperities of ſmoothneſs. Sudden difficulties often ſtart up from the ambuſhes of art, ſtop the career of activity, repreſs the gaiety of confidence, and when we imagine ourſelves almoſt at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different meaſures.

There are many things which we every day ſee others unable to perform, and perhaps have even

ourſelves miſcarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afreſh at every new failure, or to promiſe certainty of ſucceſs to our next eſſay; but when we try, the ſame hindrances recur, the ſame inability is perceived, and the vexation of diſappointment muſt again be ſuffered.

Of the various kinds of ſpeaking or writing, which ſerve neceſſity, or promote pleaſure, none appears ſo artleſs or eaſy as ſimple narration; for what ſhould make him that knows the whole order and progreſs of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find ſuch as endeavour to entertain or inſtruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illuſtrate, and loſing themſelves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digreſſion and confuſion. When we have congratulated ourſelves upon a new opportunity of enquiry, and new means of information; it often happens, that without deſigning either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingneſs to diſcloſe it, the relator fills the ear with empty ſounds, harraſſes the attention with fruitleſs impatience, and diſturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of conſequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the ſame principle, that no writer has a more eaſy taſk than the hiſtorian. The philoſopher has the works of omniſcience to examine; and is therefore engaged in diſquiſitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet truſts to his invention, and is not only in danger of thoſe inconſiſtencies, to which every one is expoſed by departure from truth; but may be cenſured as well for deficiencies

of

of matter, as for irregularity of diſpoſition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy hiſtorian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treaſure for his uſe. He has only the actions and deſigns of men like himſelf to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconſiſtency of ſtateſmen, the injuſtice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety conſiſtent, or uniting probability with ſurprize, needs not to diſturb him; the manners and actions of his perſonages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leiſure to employ all his powers in arranging and diſplaying them.

Yet, even with theſe advantages, very few in any age have been able to raiſe themſelves to reputation by writing hiſtories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their anceſtors, or undertake to tranſmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when faſhion and novelty have ceaſed to recommend them, are of no other uſe than chronological memorials, which neceſſity may ſometimes require to be conſulted, but which fright away curioſity, and diſguſt delicacy.

It is obſerved, that our nation, which has produced ſo many authors eminent for almoſt every other ſpecies of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of hiſtorical genius; and ſo far has this defect raiſed prejudices againſt us, that ſome have doubted, whether an *Engliſhman* can ſtop at that mediocrity of ſtile, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination, which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has ſo capriciouſly diſtributed underſtanding, have ſurely no claim to the honour of ſerious confutation. The inhabitants of the ſame country have oppoſite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular ſtudy can proceed only from the accidental influence of ſome temporary cauſe; and if we have failed in hiſtory, we can have failed only becauſe hiſtory has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not hiſtorians among us, whom we may venture to place in compariſon with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of *Raleigh* is deſervedly celebrated for the labour of his reſearches, and the elegance of his ſtile; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to ſelect facts, rather than adorn them; and has produced an hiſtorical diſſertation, but ſeldom riſen to the majeſty of hiſtory.

The works of *Clarendon* deſerve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itſelf, nor ſuited to the purpoſe of hiſtory. It is the effuſion of a mind crouded with ideas, and deſirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clauſe and ſentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude inartificial majeſty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, ſwells the mind by its plenitude and diffuſion. His narration is not perhaps ſufficiently rapid, being ſtopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might ſtrike the author who was preſent at the tranſactions, will not equally detain the attention of poſterity. But his ignorance or careleſneſs of the

the art of writing are amply compenſated by his knowledge of nature and of policy; the wiſdom of his maxims, the juſtneſs of his reaſonings, and the variety, diſtinctneſs, and ſtrength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, juſtly conteſt the ſuperiority of *Knolles*, who, in his hiſtory of the *Turks*, has diſplayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His ſtile, though ſomewhat obſcured by time, and ſometimes vitiated by falſe wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is ſo artfully arranged, and ſo diſtinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new perſonage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is firſt attacked, or city beſieged, he is made acquainted with its hiſtory, or ſituation; ſo that a great part of the world is brought into view. The deſcriptions of this author are without minuteneſs, and the digreſſions without oſtentation. Collateral events are ſo artfully woven into the contexture of his principal ſtory, that they cannot be disjoined, without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor ſuperfluous in his copiouſneſs. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient hiſtorians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occaſions, are tedious and languid; and ſince they are merely the voluntary ſports of imagination, prove how much the moſt judicious and ſkilful may be miſtaken, in the eſtimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have ſunk this author in obſcurity, but the remoteneſs and barbarity of the

people, whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and unintersting subject; and that writer, who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprizes and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

NUMB. 123. TUESDAY, *May* 21, 1751.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu. HOR.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste. CREECH.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet how determinately soever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with

with diſcontent, when they found that *Miſocapelus* had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the deſire of gratifying the expectations that I have raiſed, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promiſed it, I think myſelf no longer at liberty to forbear. For however I may have wiſhed to clear myſelf from every other adheſion of trade, I hope I ſhall be always wiſe enough to retain my punctuality, and amidſt all my new arts of politeneſs, continue to deſpiſe negligence, and deteſt falſehood.

When the death of my brother had diſmiſſed me from the duties of a ſhop, I conſidered myſelf as reſtored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my anceſtors obtained. I was, however, embarraſſed with many difficulties at my firſt re-entrance into the world; for my haſte to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate meaſures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old ſtation, was conſidered by me as an obſtruction of my happineſs.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions ſtill daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices ſometimes pulling me by the ſleeve as I was walking in the ſtreet, and without any terror of my new ſword, which was, notwithſtanding, of an uncommon ſize, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old houſe, and entertaining me with hiſtories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal ſtate, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that to fright away theſe unwelcome familiarities, nothing was neceſſary, but that I ſhould, by ſplendor of dreſs, proclaim my reunion with a higher rank. I there-

fore ſent for my taylor; ordered a ſuit with twice the uſual quantity of lace; and, that I might not let my perſecutors increaſe their confidence, by the habit of accoſting me, ſtaid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I paſſed in practiſing a forbidding frown, a ſmile of condeſcenſion, a ſlight ſalutation, and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with ſo much levity and ſprightlineſs, that I made no doubt of diſcouraging all publick attempts upon my dignity. I therefore iſſued forth in my new coat, with a reſolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter diſtance; and pleaſed myſelf with the timidity and reverence, which I ſhould impreſs upon all who had hitherto preſumed to haraſs me with their freedoms. But whatever was the cauſe, I did not find myſelf received with any new degree of reſpect; thoſe whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their uſual phraſes of benevolence; and thoſe whoſe acquaintance I ſolicited, grew more ſupercilious and reſerved. I began ſoon to repent the expence, by which I had procured no advantage, and to ſuſpect that a ſhining dreſs, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itſelf, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to ſuffer in my initiation to politeneſs. I was ſo much tortured by the inceſſant civilities of my companions, that I never paſſed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at laſt left my lodgings, and fixed myſelf in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a

gentleman

gentleman juſt returned from his travels, and was pleaſed to have my landlord believe, that I was in ſome danger from importunate creditors; but this ſcheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation ſent to offer me, though I had now retired from buſineſs, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore reſolved to ſtay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my ſervants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with ſecret ſatisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatneſs and felicity of the eſquire; though the converſation ſeldom ended without ſome complaint of my covetouſneſs, or ſome remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the publick walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not obſerve, without wonder, as I paſſed by them, how frequently they were talking of a taylor. I longed, however, to be admitted to converſation, and was ſomewhat weary of walking in crouds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the reſt, till a lady whom I endeavoured to protect in a crouded paſſage, as ſhe was about to ſtep into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that, as ſhe had often diſtinguiſhed me for my modeſt and reſpectful behaviour, whenever I ſet up for myſelf, I might expect to ſee her among my firſt cuſtomers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I indeed ſometimes entered the walks again, but was always blaſted by this deſtructive lady, whoſe miſchievous generoſity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practiſe my adſcititious character upon another ſtage, I betook myſelf to a coffee-houſe frequented by wits,

wits, among whom I learned in a ſhort time the cant of criticiſm, and talked ſo loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and ſentiment, and diction, and ſimilies, and contraſts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often deſired to lead the hiſs and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a ſentence have I hiſſed, which I did not underſtand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At laſt a malignant author, whoſe performance I had perſecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon *Tape* the critick, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My deſire to be a fine gentleman ſtill continued: I therefore, after a ſhort ſuſpenſe, choſe a new ſet of friends at the gaming-table, and was for ſome time pleaſed with the civility and openneſs with which I found myſelf treated. I was indeed obliged to play, but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never ſurpriſed into large ſums. What might have been the conſequence of long familiarity with theſe plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the conſtables entered and ſeized us, and I was once more compelled to ſink into my former condition, by ſending for my old maſter to atteſt my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I ſhould aſpire, I was ſummoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to diſtinguiſh myſelf, and to ſupport the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horſes, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increaſed the ſalary of the huntſman. But when I entered the field,

field, it was ſoon diſcovered, that I was not deſtined to the glories of the chace. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marſh; I ſhivered on the brink of a river while the ſportſmen croſſed it, and trembled at the ſight of a five-bar gate. When the ſport and danger were over, I was ſtill equally diſconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly whiſpering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, ſoon recalled me to domeſtick pleaſures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but wherever I came, there was always ſome unlucky converſation upon ribbands, fillets, pins, or thread, which drove all my ſtock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with ſhame and dejection.

Thus I paſſed the ten firſt years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at laſt to repreſs that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, inſtead of waſting more of my life in vain endeavours after accompliſhments, which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I ſhall confine my care to thoſe higher excellencies which are in every man's power; and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and eaſe, hope to ſecure eſteem by honeſty and truth.

I am, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

NUMB. 124. SATURDAY, *May* 25, 1751.

——Tacitum ſylvas inter reptare ſalubres,
Curantem quicquid dignum ſapiente bonoque eſt. HOR.

To range in ſilence through each healthful wood,
And muſe what's worthy of the wiſe and good.

ELPHINSTON.

THE ſeaſon of the year is now come, in which the theatres are ſhut, and the card-tables forſaken; the regions of luxury are for a while unpeopled, and pleaſure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to ſtill ſcenes and erratick gratifications. Thoſe who have paſſed many months in a continual tumult of diverſion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon ſome new appointment; nor ſlept at night without a dream of dances, muſick, and good hands, or of ſoft ſighs, and humble ſupplications; muſt now retire to diſtant provinces, where the ſirens of flattery are ſcarcely to be heard, where beauty ſparkles without praiſe or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the moſt important duties of ſocial benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity when by timely prevention it may be turned aſide, or by preparatory meaſures be more eaſily endured, I cannot feel the increaſing warmth, or obſerve the lengthening days, without conſidering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has ſo long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accuſtomed to hope for delight; and who, till faſhion proclaims the liberty of returning to the ſeats of mirth and elegance, muſt endure

endure the rugged 'ſquire, the ſober houſewife, the loud huntſman, or the formal parſon, the roar of obſtreperous jollity, or the dulneſs of prudential inſtruction; without any retreat, but to the gloom of ſolitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniencies, and muſt learn, however unwillingly, to endure themſelves.

In winter, the life of the polite and gay may be ſaid to roll on with a ſtrong and rapid current; they float along from pleaſure to pleaſure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and purſue the courſe of the ſtream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themſelves in progreſſion, and careleſs whither they are going. But the months of ſummer are a kind of ſleeping ſtagnation without wind or tide, where they are left to force themſelves forward by their own labour, and to direct their paſſage by their own ſkill; and where, if they have not ſome internal principle of activity, they muſt be ſtranded upon ſhallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, ſome to whom this univerſal diſſolution of gay ſocieties affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without diſgrace, the poſt which they have found themſelves unable to maintain; and of ſeeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from aſſemblies where, after a ſhort triumph of unconteſted ſuperiority, they are overpowered by ſome new intruder of ſofter elegance or ſprightlier vivacity. By theſe, hopeleſs of victory, and yet aſhamed to confeſs a conqueſt, the ſummer is regarded as a releaſe from the fatiguing ſervice of celebrity, a diſmiſſion to more certain joys and a ſafer empire. They now ſolace themſelves with the influence which they ſhall obtain, where

where they have no rival to fear; and with the luſtre which they ſhall effuſe, when nothing can be ſeen of brighter ſplendor. They imagine, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the ruſticks will croud about them; plan the laws of a new aſſembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thouſand pleaſing expectations ſwarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with diſtinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconſtancy and deſertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to loſe four months in unactive obſcurity. Many complaints do vexation and deſire extort from thoſe exiled tyrants of the town, againſt the inexorable ſun, who purſues his courſe without any regard to love or beauty; and viſits either tropick at the ſtated time, whether ſhunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of publick reſort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtſhip, ſubmiſſion, and applauſe; a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praiſe of ignorance, and the ſubjection of weakneſs, are little regarded by beauties who have been accuſtomed to more important conqueſts, and more valuable panegyricks. Nor indeed ſhould the powers which have made havock in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble conteſt with the ruddy milkmaid.

How

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routes, no shews, no ridottos; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platonists imagine, that the future punishment of those who have in this life debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitations of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorifick radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the *Platonick* penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose, and the hand of avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it, only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example; and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary

to

to ſtruggle with habit, and abandon faſhion. To theſe many arts of ſpending time might be recommended, which would neither ſadden the preſent hour with wearineſs, nor the future with repentance.

It would ſeem impoſſible to a ſolitary ſpeculatiſt, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midſt of a world filled with variety, perpetually preſſing upon the ſenſes and irritating curioſity, is ſurely a ſufficient ſecurity againſt the languiſhment of inattention. Novelty is indeed neceſſary to preſerve eagerneſs and alacrity; but art and nature have ſtores inexhauſtible by human intellects; and every moment produces ſomething new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent obſervation.

Some ſtudies, for which the country and the ſummer afford peculiar opportunities, I ſhall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future eſſay; but if there be any apprehenſion not apt to admit unaccuſtomed ideas, or any attention ſo ſtubborn and inflexible, as not eaſily to comply with new directions, even theſe obſtructions cannot exclude the pleaſure of application; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, ſincerely and regularly performed, will always be ſufficient to exalt the meaneſt, and to exerciſe the higheſt underſtanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by ſtated duties to meditations on eternal intereſts; nor can any hour be long, which is ſpent in obtaining ſome new qualification for celeſtial happineſs.

NUMB. 125. TUESDAY, *May* 28, 1751.

Deſcriptas ſervare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, ſi nequeo ignoroque, poëta ſalutor? HOR.

But if, through weakneſs, or my want of art,
I can't to every different ſtyle impart
The proper ſtrokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name? FRANCIS.

IT is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human underſtandings, ſubject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are ſcarcely to be included in any ſtanding form of expreſſion, becauſe they are always ſuffering ſome alteration of their ſtate. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; every thing is ſet above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffuſed in their relations, and the performances of art too inconſtant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impoſſible to impreſs upon our minds an adequate and juſt repreſentation of an object ſo great that we can never take it into our view, or ſo mutable that it is always changing under our eye, and has already loſt its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no leſs difficult or uncertain in criticiſms than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unſuſceptible of limitations, and impatient of reſtraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of diſtinction, and burſt the incloſures of regularity. There is therefore ſcarcely any ſpecies of

of writing, of which we can tell what is its eſſence, and what are its conſtituents; every new genius produces ſome innovation, which, when invented and approved, ſubverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had eſtabliſhed.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; for though perhaps they might properly have contented themſelves, with declaring it to be *ſuch a dramatick repreſentation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarraſſed their definition with the means by which the comick writers attain their end, without conſidering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be compriſed in precept. Thus, ſome make comedy a repreſentation of mean, and others of bad men; ſome think that its eſſence conſiſts in the unimportance, others in the fictitiouſneſs of the tranſaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatick compoſition which raiſes mirth is comick; and that, to raiſe mirth, it is by no means univerſally neceſſary, that the perſonages ſhould be either mean or corrupt, nor always requiſite, that the action ſhould be trivial, nor ever, that it ſhould be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatick poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, ſome abſurdities might have been prevented, with which the compoſitions of our greateſt poets are diſgraced, who, for want of ſome ſettled ideas and accurate diſtinctions, have unhappily confounded tragick with comick ſentiments. They ſeem to have thought, that as the meanneſs of perſonages conſtituted comedy, their greatneſs was ſufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was neceſ-

ſary

ſary but that they ſhould croud the ſcene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfal of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not conſidered, that thoughts or incidents in themſelves ridiculous, grow ſtill more groteſque by the ſolemnity of ſuch characters; that reaſon and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is deſpicable and abſurd, will not, by any aſſociation with ſplendid titles, become rational or great; that the moſt important affairs, by an intermixture of an unſeaſonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonſenſe or to folly.

"Comedy, ſays *Horace*, ſometimes raiſes her "voice;" and tragedy may likewiſe on proper occaſions abate her dignity; but as the comick perſonages can only depart from their familiarity of ſtile, when the more violent paſſions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy ſhould never deſcend to trifle, but in the hours of eaſe, and intermiſſions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of *Don Sebaſtian*, when the king of *Portugal* is in the hands of his enemy, and having juſt drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boaſt that his duſt ſhall take poſſeſſion of *Africk*, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moluch. What ſhall I do to conquer thee?

Seb. Impoſſible!
Souls know no conquerors.

M. Mol. I'll ſhew thee for a monſter thro' my *Africk*.

Seb. No, thou canſt only ſhew me for a man:

Africk

Africk is ſtor'd with monſters; man's a prodigy
Thy ſubjects have not ſeen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'ſt as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou miſtak'ſt,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Miniſter. Sure he would ſleep.

This converſation, with the ſly remark of the miniſter, can only be found not to be comick, becauſe it wants the probability neceſſary to repreſentations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonry and farce.

The ſame play affords a ſmart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of *Sebaſtian*, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat:

——No more replies,
But ſee thou do'ſt it: Or——
To which *Dorax* anſwers,
Choak in that threat: I can ſay Or as loud.

A thouſand inſtances of ſuch impropriety might be produced, were not one ſcene in *Aureng-Zebe* ſufficient to exemplify it. *Indamora*, a captive queen, having *Aureng-Zebe* for her lover, employs *Arimant*, to whoſe charge ſhe had been intruſted, and whom ſhe had made ſenſible of her charms, to carry a meſſage to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand:* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the meſſenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny purſue:
You lay commands, both cruel and unjuſt,
To ſerve my rival, and betray my truſt.
Ind. You

Ind. You firſt betray'd your truſt in loving me:
And ſhould not I my own advantage ſee?
Serving my love, you may my friendſhip gain:
You know the reſt of your pretences vain.
You muſt, my *Arimant*, you muſt be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.

Arim. I'll to the king, and ſtrait my truſt reſign.

Ind. His truſt you may, but you ſhall never mine.
Heav'n made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confident and friend:
As ſuch, I keep no ſecret from your ſight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write:
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.

Arim. *I aſk not heav'n my freedom to reſtore,*
[Reading.
But only for your ſake——I'll read no more.
And yet I muſt——
Leſs for my own, than for your ſorrow ſad—[Reading.
Another line, like this, would make me mad——
Heav'n! ſhe goes on——yet more——and yet more kind! [*As Reading.*
Each ſentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night—— [Reading.
Thank fortune, who did ſuch a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant *ſhall be your guide.*
Not only to be made an inſtrument,
But pre-engag'd without my own conſent!

Ind. Unknown t'engage you, ſtill augments my ſcore,
And gives you ſcope of meriting the more.

Arim. The beſt of men
Some int'reſt in their actions muſt confeſs;
None merit, but in hope they may poſſeſs:
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like *Bellerophon*, my own ſentence bear.

Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your beſt advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you muſt obey me, ſoon or late:
Why ſhould you vainly ſtruggle with your fate?

Arim. I thank thee, heav'n! thou haſt been wond'rous kind!
Why am I thus to ſlavery deſign'd,
And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind!
Or make thy orders with my reaſon ſuit,
Or let me live by ſenſe, a glorious brute——
[*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with ſpeed, before
That dreadful ſentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this ſcene, every circumſtance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild abſurdity of the expedient; the contemptible ſubjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter only becauſe it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expoſtulations of a voluntary ſlave; the imperious haughtineſs of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and freewill; and his wiſe wiſh to loſe his reaſon as ſoon as he finds himſelf about to do what he cannot perſuade his reaſon to approve, are ſurely ſufficient to awaken the moſt torpid riſibility.

There is ſcarce a tragedy of the laſt century which has not debaſed its moſt important incidents, and polluted its moſt ſerious interlocutions with buffoonry and meanneſs; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the preſent age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has

has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The later tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumor of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

NUMB. 126. SATURDAY, *June* 1, 1751.

—Nihil est aliud magnum quam multa minuta. VET. AUCT.

Sands form the mountain, moments make the year. YOUNG.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AMONG other topicks of conversation which your papers supply, I was lately engaged in a discussion of the character given by *Tranquilla* of her lover *Venustulus*, whom, notwithstanding the severity of his mistress, the greater number seemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

One of the company remarked, that prudence ought to be distinguished from fear; and that if *Venustulus* was afraid of nocturnal adventures, no man who considered how much every avenue of

the town was infeſted with robbers could think him blameable; for why ſhould life be hazarded without proſpect of honour or advantage! Another was of opinion, that a brave man might be afraid of croſſing the river in the calmeſt weather; and declared, that, for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be ſeen tottering in a wooden caſe, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overſet by accident, or negligence, or by the force of a ſudden guſt, or the ruſh of a larger veſſel. It was his cuſtom, he ſaid, to keep the ſecurity of day-light, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wiſe man ever periſhed by water, or was loſt in the dark.

The next was humbly of opinion, that if *Tranquilla* had ſeen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, ſhe would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his ſafety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not aſhamed to confeſs, that he could not ſee a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven ſix times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the cloſet for his ſervant, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man ſhould think himſelf diſgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a poſſibility that a dog might be mad; and that ſurely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wiſdom in flight than conteſt. By all theſe declarations another was encouraged to confeſs, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addreſſes

dreſſes to *Tranquilla*, he ſhould have been likely to incur the ſame cenſure; for among all the animals upon which nature has impreſſed deformity and horror, there was none whom he durſt not encounter rather than a beetle.

Thus, Sir, though cowardice is univerſally defined too cloſe and anxious an attention to perſonal ſafety, there will be found ſcarcely any fear, however exceſſive in its degree, or unreaſonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a paſſion which every man feels ſo frequently predominant in his own breaſt, that he is unwilling to hear it cenſured with great aſperity; and, perhaps, if we confeſs the truth, the ſame reſtraint which would hinder a man from declaiming againſt the frauds of any employment among thoſe who profeſs it, ſhould withold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

Yet ſince fortitude is one of thoſe virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly neceſſary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than againſt ſuperfluous and panick terrors. Fear is implanted in us as a preſervative from evil; but its duty, like that of other paſſions, is not to overbear reaſon, but to aſſiſt it; nor ſhould it be ſuffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to raiſe phantoms of horror, or beſet life with ſupernumerary diſtreſſes.

To be always afraid of loſing life is, indeed, ſcarcely to enjoy a life that can deſerve the care of preſervation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at reſt. Our preſent ſtate admits only of a kind of negative ſecurity; we muſt conclude ourſelves ſafe when we ſee no danger, or none in-

adequate to our powers of oppoſition. Death indeed continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unſeen, unleſs we ſharpen our ſight by uſeleſs curioſity.

There is always a point at which caution, however ſolicitous, muſt limit its preſervatives, becauſe one terror often counteracts another. I once knew one of the ſpeculatiſts of cowardice whoſe reigning diſturbance was the dread of houſe-breakers. His enquiries were for nine years employed upon the beſt method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour has he ſpent in eſtabliſhing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at laſt, by the daily ſuperaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced; for one bar was ſecured by another with ſuch intricacy of ſubordination, that he was himſelf not always able to diſengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification, till being aſked how he would eſcape if he was threatened by fire, he diſcovered, that with all his care and expence, he had only been aſſiſting his own deſtruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly periſh in the flames.

There is one ſpecies of terror which thoſe who are unwilling to ſuffer the reproach of cowardice have wiſely dignified with the name of *antipathy*. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monſters of the wilderneſs while they are out of ſight, will readily confeſs his *antipathy* to a mole, a weaſel, or a frog. He has indeed no dread of harm from an inſect or a worm, but his *antipathy* turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will tranſport him with as much ſafety as his neighbours,

neighbours, but he cannot conquer his *antipathy* to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies *antipathies*, till he becomes contemptible to others and burdenſome to himſelf.

It is indeed certain, that impreſſions of dread may ſometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themſelves juſtly formidable; but when fear is diſcovered to be groundleſs, it is to be eradicated like other falſe opinions, and *antipathies* are generally ſuperable by a ſingle effort. He that has been taught to ſhudder at a mouſe, if he can perſuade himſelf to riſque one encounter will find his own ſuperiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conqueſt.

I am, Sir, &c.

THRASO.

SIR,

AS you profeſs to extend your regard to the minuteneſs of decency, as well as to the dignity of ſcience, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of perſecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houſes, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

Among the ladies who pleaſe themſelves with ſplendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice very common, to aſk every gueſt how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapeſtry; the china at the table, or the plate on the ſide-board; and on all occaſions to enquire his opinion of their judgment and their choice. *Melania* has laid her new watch in the window nineteen times, that ſhe may deſire me to look upon it. *Caliſta* has an art of dropping

her ſnuff-box by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I may admire it; and *Fulgentia* has conducted me, by miſtake, into the wrong room, at every viſit I have paid ſince her picture was put into a new frame.

I hope, Mr. RAMBLER, you will inform them, that no man ſhould be denied the privilege of ſilence, or tortured to falſe declarations; and that though ladies may juſtly claim to be exempt from rudeneſs, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To pleaſe is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honeſt praiſe; but to ſeize applauſe by violence, and call out for commendation, without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a ſpecies of tyranny by which modeſty is oppreſſed, and ſincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the reſpect paid to ſilent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

I am, &c.

MISOCOLAX.

SIR,

YOUR great predeceſſor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuſe among his female readers a deſire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not ſeem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to diſcourage them from any laudable purſuit. But however either he or you may excite our curioſity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world ſeems to have formed an univerſal conſpiracy againſt our underſtandings; our queſtions are ſuppoſed

not

not to expect anſwers, our arguments are confuted with a jeſt, and we are treated like beings who tranſgreſs the limits of our nature whenever we aſpire to ſerioufneſs or improvement.

I enquired yeſterday of a gentleman eminent for aſtronomical ſkill, what made the day long in ſummer, and ſhort in winter; and was told that nature protracted the days in ſummer, leſt ladies ſhould want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, leſt they ſhould not have hours ſufficient to ſpend at the card-table.

I hope you do not doubt but I heard ſuch information with juſt contempt, and I deſire you to diſcover to this great maſter of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I aſked the queſtion with no other intention than to ſet him free from the neceſſity of ſilence, and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite aſſembly, from which, however uneaſy, he could not than eſcape, by a kind introduction of the only ſubject on which I believed him able to ſpeak with propriety.

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

NUMB. 127. TUESDAY, *June* 4, 1751.

Cœpisti melius quàm desinis: ultima primis
Cedunt: dissimilis hic vir, at ille puer. OVID.

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy;
Thou, who began'st a man, wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But whatever was his intent, it is remarked by *Scaliger*, that he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who at their first entrance into the world were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniencies of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit, may be compared to the progress of a body driven by a blow. It moves for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the first impulse is perpetually decreasing, and though it should encounter no obstacle capable

ble of quelling it by a ſudden ſtop, the reſiſtance of the medium through which it paſſes, and the latent inequalities of the ſmootheſt ſurface, will in a ſhort time by continued retardation wholly overpower it. Some hindrances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a diſtance neceſſarily loſes ſight of all that fills up the intermediate ſpace, and therefore ſets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor ſuſpects a thouſand obſtacles by which he afterwards finds his paſſage embarraſſed and obſtructed. Some are indeed ſtopt at once in their career by a ſudden ſhock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the croſs impulſe of ſome violent paſſion; but far the greater part languiſh by ſlow degrees, deviate at firſt into ſlight obliquities, and themſelves ſcarcely perceive at what time their ardour forſook them, or when they loſt ſight of their original deſign.

Wearineſs and negligence are perpetually prevailing by ſilent encroachments, aſſiſted by different cauſes, and not obſerved till they cannot, without great difficulty, be oppoſed. Labour neceſſarily requires pauſes of eaſe and relaxation, and the deliciouſneſs of eaſe commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourſelves to renew our attempts, but eagerly liſten to every argument for frequent interpoſitions of amuſement; for when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can ſcarcely be diſpoſſeſſed but by ſuch efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of induſtry to be equally endangered by miſcarriage and ſucceſs, by confidence and deſpondency. He that engages in a great undertaking with a falſe opinion of its facility, or too

high conceptions of his own ſtrength, is eaſily diſcouraged by the firſt hindrance of his advances, becauſe he had promiſed himſelf an equal and perpetual progreſſion without impediment or diſturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the ſtate of a man ſurpriſed by a tempeſt where he purpoſed only to baſk in the calm, or ſport in the ſhallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprize greater, but the profit leſs, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herſelf not only certain of accompliſhing every adventure, but of obtaining thoſe rewards which the accompliſhment may deſerve. She is not eaſily perſuaded to believe that the force of merit can be reſiſted by obſtinacy and avarice, or its luſtre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the moſt evident claims to praiſe or preferment may be rejected by malice againſt conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be ſometimes defeated by artifices, and ſometimes overborn by clamour; that in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themſelves excelled; that others have ceaſed their curioſity, and conſider every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and diſturber of their repoſe; that ſome are engaged in complications of intereſt which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themſelves up implicitly to every report which hatred diſſeminates or folly ſcatters; and that whoever aſpires to the notice of the publick, has in almoſt every man an

enemy

enemy and a rival; and muſt ſtruggle with the oppoſition of the daring, and elude the ſtratagems of the timorous, muſt quicken the frigid and ſoften the obdurate, muſt reclaim perverſeneſs and inform ſtupidity.

It is no wonder that when the proſpect of reward has vaniſhed, the zeal of enterprize ſhould ceaſe; for who would perſevere to cultivate the ſoil which he has, after long labour, diſcovered to be barren? He who hath pleaſed himſelf with anticipated praiſes, and expected that he ſhould meet in every place with patronage or friendſhip, will ſoon remit his vigour, when he finds that from thoſe who deſire to be conſidered as his admirers nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuſe to own his excellence, leſt they ſhould be too juſtly expected to reward it.

A man thus cut off from the proſpect of that port to which his addreſs and fortitude had been employed to ſteer him, often abandons himſelf to chance and to the wind, and glides careleſs and idle down the current of life, without reſolution to make another effort, till he is ſwallowed up by the gulph of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the ſame deſertion of themſelves by a contrary fallacy. It was ſaid of *Hannibal* that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he ſhould know how to uſe it. The folly of deſiſting too ſoon from ſucceſsful labours, and the haſte of enjoying advantages before they are ſecured, is often fatal to men of impetuous deſire, to men whoſe conſciouſneſs of uncommon powers fills them with preſumption, and who having born oppoſition down before them, and left emulation

panting behind, are early perſuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now being no longer in danger from competitors, they may paſs the reſt of their days in the enjoyment of their acquiſitions, in contemplation of their own ſuperiority, and in attention to their own praiſes, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not ſufficiently conſidered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accompliſh, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who ſtops at any point of excellence is every day ſinking in eſtimation, becauſe his improvement grows continually more incommenſurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himſelf, they who have once been juſtly celebrated, imagine that they ſtill have the ſame pretenſions to regard, and ſeldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorſe; for if the ſpendthrift's poverty be imbittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how muſt the idler's obſcurity be clouded by remembering that he once had luſtre!

Theſe errors all ariſe from an original miſtake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praiſes or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applauſe. But the conſideration that life is only depoſited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a maſter who will regard his endeavours, not his ſucceſs, would have pre-

ſerved

served him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

NUMB. 128. SATURDAY, *June* 8, 1751.

Αἰὼν δ' ᾀσφαλὴς
Οὐκ ἐγένετ, οὔτ' Αἰακίδᾳ παρὰ Πηλεῖ,
Οὔτε πὰρ' ἀντιθέῳ
Κάδμῳ· λέγονταί γε μὰν βρότων
Ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον ὃς
Σχεῖν. PIND.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,
E'er yet had happiness complete;
Nor *Peleus*, grandson of the sky,
Nor *Cadmus*, scap'd the shafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the pow'rs on high,
With ev'ry bliss that man can gain.

THE writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil, that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None

None but thoſe who have learned the art of ſubjecting their ſenſes as well as reaſon to hypothetical ſyſtems, can be perſuaded by the moſt ſpecious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleaſures and vexations, that external accidents operate variouſly upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own ſenſations what another would feel in the ſame circumſtances.

If the general diſpoſition of things be eſtimated by the repreſentation which every one makes of his own ſtate, the world muſt be conſidered as the abode of ſorrow and miſery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and diſtreſſes? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we are all placed in an elyſian region, overſpread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; ſince ſcarcely any complaint is uttered without cenſure from thoſe that hear it, and almoſt all are allowed to have obtained a proviſion at leaſt adequate to their virtue or their underſtanding, to poſſeſs either more than they deſerve or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with ſuch diſſimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive ſo many of our ideas and opinions from the ſtate of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind ſeem to the other hypocriſy, folly, and affectation. Every claſs of ſociety has its cant of lamentation, which is underſtood or regarded by none but themſelves; and every part of life has its uneaſineſſes, which

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thoſe who do not feel them will not commiſerate. An event which ſpreads diſtraction over half the commercial world, aſſembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and ſhakes the nerves of a thouſand ſtockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love which fills the young breaſt with inceſſant alternations of hope and fear, and ſteals away the night and day from every other pleaſure or employment, is regarded by them whoſe paſſions time has extinguiſhed, as an amuſement, which can properly raiſe neither joy nor ſorrow, and, though it may be ſuffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, ſhould always give way to prudence or intereſt.

He that never had any other deſire than to fill a cheſt with money, or to add another manour to his eſtate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be aſtoniſhed to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curioſity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wiſh but to ſpeak what was never ſpoken before; who, if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhauſt their patrimonies in treating thoſe who will hear them talk; and if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes for the pleaſure of making others laugh? How ſlowly would he believe that there are men who would rather loſe a legacy than the reputation of a diſtich; who think it leſs diſgrace to want money than repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a conteſt of raillery is ſometimes ſufficient to deprive of ſleep;

ſleep; and who would eſteem it a lighter evil to miſs a profitable bargain by ſome accidental delay, than not to have thought of a ſmart reply till the time of producing it was paſt? How little would he ſuſpect that this child of idleneſs and frolick enters every aſſembly with a beating boſom, like a litigant on the day of deciſion, and revolves the probability of applauſe with the anxiety of a conſpirator whoſe fate depends upon the next night; and at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a ſhow of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depreſſed with diſappointment; and immures himſelf in his cloſet, that he may diſencumber his memory at leiſure, review the progreſs of the day, ſtate with accuracy his loſs or gain of reputation, and examine the cauſes of his failure or ſucceſs?

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and reſtleſs anxieties, by which female happineſs is particularly diſturbed. A ſolitary philoſopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and ſorrow, lulled in perpetual quiet, and feaſted with unmingled pleaſure; for what can interrupt the content of thoſe, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours, and accumulate immunities; thoſe to whom rudeneſs is infamy, and inſult is cowardice; whoſe eye commands the brave, and whoſe ſmiles ſoften the ſevere; whom the ſailor travels to adorn, the ſoldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and ſcience, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingneſs to be pleaſed?

Surely,

Surely, among theſe favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity muſt have fixed her reſidence; they muſt know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life muſt always move either to the ſlow or ſprightly melody of the lyre of gladneſs; they can never aſſemble but to pleaſure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who ſhould hover at a diſtance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and ſpeculation. But experience will ſoon diſcover how eaſily thoſe are diſguſted who have been made nice by plenty, and tender by indulgence. He will ſoon ſee to how many dangers power is expoſed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how eaſily that tranquillity is moleſted which can only be ſoothed with the ſongs of flattery. It is impoſſible to ſupply wants as faſt as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniencies by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are ſo hard to pleaſe as thoſe whom ſatiety of pleaſure makes weary of themſelves; nor any ſo readily provoked as thoſe who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are indeed ſome ſtrokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The miſtreſs of *Catullus* wept for her ſparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be ſometimes ſick in the preſent age. The moſt faſhionable brocade is ſubject to ſtains; a pinner, the pride of *Bruſſels*, may be torn by a careleſs waſher; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph of a new ſuit may be interrupted on the firſt day of its enjoyment,

enjoyment, and all diſtinctions of dreſs unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the ſtate of every age, every ſex, and every condition: all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever therefore finds himſelf inclined to envy another, ſhould remember that he knows not the real condition which he deſires to obtain, but is certain that by indulging a vicious paſſion, he muſt leſſen that happineſs which he thinks already too ſparingly beſtowed.

NUMB. 129. TUESDAY, *June* 11, 1751.

——*Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,*
Materiam, quæ ſit ingenioſus, habes.
Poſſidet en terras, et poſſidet æquora Minos:
Nec tellus noſtræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Reſtat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo. OVID.

Now, *Dædalus*, behold, by fate aſſign'd,
A taſk proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and ſea withſtand;
Thine, *Minos*, is the main, and thine the land.
The ſkies are open—let us try the ſkies:
Forgive, great *Jove*, the daring enterprize.

MOraliſts, like other writers, inſtead of caſting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curioſity with that ſecondary knowledge which books afford, and think themſelves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient ſyſtem, or new illuſtration of eſtabliſhed principles. The

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ſage precepts of the firſt inſtructors of the world are tranſmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without ſome loſs of their original force at every repercuſſion.

I know not whether any other reaſon than this idleneſs of imitation can be aſſigned for that uniform and conſtant partiality, by which ſome vices have hitherto eſcaped cenſure, and ſome virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I diſcover why elſe we have been warned only againſt part of our enemies, while the reſt have been ſuffered to ſteal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one ſide been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incurſions of error, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topicks of moral declamation, may be numbered the miſcarriages of imprudent boldneſs, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philoſopher is crouded with examples of temerity that ſunk under burthens which ſhe laid upon herſelf, and called out enemies to battle by whom ſhe was deſtroyed.

Their remarks are too juſt to be diſputed, and too ſalutary to be rejected; but there is likewiſe ſome danger leſt timorous prudence ſhould be inculcated, till courage and enterprize are wholly repreſſed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorifick wiſdom.

Every man ſhould, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own ſakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty ſhould not be

be avoided merely becauſe we may expoſe ourſelves to miſery or diſgrace; yet it may be juſtly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeleſs deſigns, ſince we might by a juſt eſtimate of our abilities become more uſeful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of ſuicide; there is a ridiculous perſeverance in impracticable ſchemes, which is juſtly puniſhed with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either ſide of rectitude without ruſhing againſt apparent abſurdity; and according to the inclinations of nature, or the impreſſions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon raſhneſs or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimouſly confeſſed: but it is likewiſe acknowledged that this middle path is ſo narrow, that it cannot eaſily be diſcovered, and ſo little beaten that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed; the care therefore of all thoſe who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they ſhould tend towards the ſide of ſafety.

It can, indeed, raiſe no wonder that temerity has been generally cenſured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of

of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderneſs, becauſe it never flatters us by that appearance of ſoftneſs and imbecillity which is commonly neceſſary to conciliate compaſſion. But if the ſame attention had been applied to the ſearch of arguments againſt the folly of preſuppoſing impoſſibilities, and anticipating fruſtration, I know not whether many would not have been rouſed to uſefulneſs, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, leſt they ſhould unfortunately fail.

It is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh our own intereſt from that of others, and that diſtinction will perhaps aſſiſt us in fixing the juſt limits of caution and adventurouſneſs. In an undertaking that involves the happineſs or the ſafety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by thoſe who partake the danger; but where only ourſelves can ſuffer by miſcarriage, we are not confined within ſuch narrow limits; and ſtill leſs is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by ſucceſs, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which eaſe is favoured; and as no reſentment is raiſed by general repreſentations of human folly, even in thoſe who are moſt eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confeſs, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakneſs, and therefore frequently preſumes to attempt what he can never accompliſh; but it ought likewiſe to be remembered, that man is no leſs ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accompliſhed a thouſand deſigns, which

which the prejudices of cowardice reſtrained him from attempting.

It is obſerved in the golden verſes of *Pythagoras*, that *Power is never far from neceſſity*. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and heſitation, when diffidence is abſorbed in the ſenſe of danger, or overwhelmed by ſome reſiſtleſs paſſion. We then ſoon diſcover, that difficulty is, for the moſt part, the daughter of idleneſs, that the obſtacles with which our way ſeemed to be obſtructed were only phantoms, which we believed real becauſe we durſt not advance to a cloſe examination; and we learn that it is impoſſible to determine without experience how much conſtancy may endure, or perſeverance perform.

But whatever pleaſure may be found in the review of diſtreſſes when art or courage has ſurmounted them, few will be perſuaded to wiſh that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one ſhould therefore endeavour to invigorate himſelf by reaſon and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have repoſited in him before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulſion ſhall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reaſonable being to owe that ſtrength to neceſſity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to induſtry than the deſire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away deſpair, cannot be wanting to him who conſiders how much life is now advanced beyond the ſtate of naked, undiſciplined,

undiſciplined, uninſtructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impoſſible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not ſome, more daring than the reſt, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and cenſure. Nor is there yet any reaſon to doubt that the ſame labour would be rewarded with the ſame ſucceſs. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiſcovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that ſomething may be added by his induſtry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happineſs. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add ſomething, however little, every one may hope; and of every honeſt endeavour it is certain, that, however unſucceſsful, it will be at laſt rewarded.

NUMB. 130. SATURDAY, *June* 15, 1751.

Non ſic prata novo vere decentia
Æſtatis calidæ diſpoliat vapor,
Sævit ſolſtitio cum medius dies;——
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Momento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formoſi ſpolium corporis abſtulit.
Res eſt forma fugax. Quis ſapiens bono
Confidat fragili? SENECA.

Not faſter in the ſummer's ray
The ſpring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguiſh and decay conſume
The ſmiling virgin's roſy bloom.
Some beauty's ſnatch'd each day, each hour;
For beauty is a fleeting flow'r:
Then how can wiſdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride? ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have very lately obſerved that in the numerous ſubdiviſions of the world, every claſs and order of mankind have joys and ſorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleaſure from events which paſs unheeded before other eyes, but can ſcarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well diſpoſed colours or harmonious ſounds can be imparted to ſuch as want the ſenſes of hearing or of ſight.

I am ſo ſtrongly convinced of the juſtneſs of this remark, and have on ſo many occaſions diſcovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which ſhe thinks herſelf not in danger, and indolence liſtens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am

am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I queſtion whether you will condeſcend to peruſe my narrative, or without the help of ſome female ſpeculatiſt be able to underſtand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reaſon I had my regard turned wholly upon myſelf, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praiſe and admiration. My mother, whoſe face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil ſo great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or diſproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an aſſemblage of all that could raiſe envy or deſire, and predicted with triumphant fondneſs the extent of my conqueſts, and the number of my ſlaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face but that her eyes were without luſtre; how another ſtruck the ſight at a diſtance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another diſgraced an elegant ſhape with a brown ſkin; ſome had ſhort fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As ſhe expected no happineſs nor advantage but from beauty, ſhe thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindneſs was chiefly exerciſed in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a ſcar, or ſtain me with a freckle: ſhe never thought me ſufficiently ſhaded from the ſun, or ſcreened from the fire. She was ſevere or indulgent with no other intention than the preſervation of my form; ſhe excuſed me from work, leſt I ſhould learn

to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; ſhe ſnatched away my book, becauſe a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but ſhe would ſcarcely ſuffer me to eat, leſt I ſhould ſpoil my ſhape, nor to walk leſt I ſhould ſwell my ancle with a ſprain. At night I was accurately ſurveyed from head to foot, leſt I ſhould have ſuffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to ſleep, till I had paſſed through the coſmetick diſcipline, part of which was a regular luſtration performed with bean-flower water and may-dews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by ſome of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The ſoftneſs of my hands was ſecured by medicated gloves, and my boſom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to diſcuſs pimples, and clear diſcolorations.

I was always called up early, becauſe the morning air gives a freſhneſs to the cheeks; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, becauſe the neck is eaſily tanned by the riſing ſun. I was then dreſſed with a thouſand precautions, and again heard my own praiſes, and triumphed in the compliments and prognoſtications of all that approached me.

My mother was not ſo much prepoſſeſſed with an opinion of my natural excellencies as not to think ſome cultivation neceſſary to their completion. She took care that I ſhould want none of the accompliſhments included in female education, or conſidered as neceſſary in faſhionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-maſter's ball, and Mr. *Ariet* uſed

uſed to reproach his other ſcholars with my performances on the harpſichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At laſt the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exerciſes, and qualified to diſplay in the open world thoſe accompliſhments which had yet only been diſcovered in ſelect parties, or domeſtick aſſemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a publick night, which ſhe conſidered as the moſt important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could aſcertain. Every ornament was tried in every poſition, every friend was conſulted about the colour of my dreſs, and the mantuamakers were harraſſed with directions and alterations.

At laſt the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dreſſed and ſent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his firſt ſally. Scholars have told me of a *Spartan* matron, who, when ſhe armed her ſon for battle, bade him bring back his ſhield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent diſmiſſed me to a field, in her opinion of equal glory, with a command to ſhew that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received like other pleaſing novelties with a tumult of applauſe. Every man who valued himſelf upon the graces of his perſon, or the elegance of his addreſs, crouded about me, and wit and ſplendor contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with inceſſant civilities, which were made more pleaſing by the apparent

envy of thoſe whom my preſence expoſed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmoſt wiſhes, and from this time ſtood in the firſt rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to riſe into faſhion, and cenſured by thoſe whom age or diſappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleaſed herſelf with the hopes of ſeeing my exaltation, dreſſed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I repreſented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that ſhe ſhould ſcorn the reptile who could enquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She adviſed me to proſecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deſerve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed ſo numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I ſhould ſeem to give the preference. But having been ſteadily and induſtriouſly inſtructed to preſerve my heart from any impreſſions which might hinder me from conſulting my intereſt, I acted with leſs embarraſſment, becauſe my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had ſingled out one from the reſt as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my meaſures by the rules of art; and yet when the ardour of the firſt viſits was ſpent, generally found a ſudden declenſion of my influence; I felt in myſelf the want of ſome power to diverſify amuſement, and enliven converſation, and could not but ſuſpect that my mind failed in performing the promiſes of my face.

This

This opinion was ſoon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married *Lavinia* with leſs beauty and fortune than mine, becauſe he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was paſt.

The vanity of my mother would not ſuffer her to diſcover any defect in one that had been formed by her inſtructions, and had all the excellence which ſhe herſelf could boaſt. She told me that nothing ſo much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away thoſe that could make the beſt ſettlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philoſophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obſcurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet ſtep with a new *French* dancing-maſter, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almoſt completed my nineteenth year: if my charms had loſt any of their ſoftneſs, it was more than compenſated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was ſupplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when in the midſt of my hopes and ſchemes I was ſeized by that dreadful malady which has ſo often put a ſudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often fluſhed with tranſport at its own reflexion, and ſaw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praiſes, irrecoverably deſtroyed, I ſunk at once into melancholy and

deſpondence. My pain was not much conſoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not loſt my life together with my beauty, and declared, that ſhe thought a young woman diveſted of her charms had nothing for which thoſe who loved her could deſire to ſave her from the grave.

Having thus continued by relation to the period from which my life took a new courſe, I ſhall conclude it in another letter, if by publiſhing this you ſhew any regard for the correſpondence of,

Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

NUMB. 131. TUESDAY, *June* 18, 1751.

——Fatis accede deiſque,
Et cole felices; miſeros fuge. Sidera cælo
Ut diſtant, flamma mari, ſic utile recto. LUCAN.

Still follow where auſpicious fates invite;
Careſs the happy, and the wretched ſlight.
Sooner ſhall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than intereſt with right.

F. LEWIS.

THERE is ſcarcely any ſentiment in which, amidſt the innumerable varieties of inclination, that nature or accident have ſcattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring than in the wiſh for riches; a wiſh indeed ſo prevalent that it may be conſidered as univerſal and tranſcendental, as the deſire in which all other deſires are included, and of which the various purpoſes which actuate mankind are only ſubordinate ſpecies and different modifications.

Wealth

Wealth is the general center of inclination, the point to which all minds preſerve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberleſs directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate deſign, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquieſce, we ſeldom conſider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth therefore all unanimouſly confeſs the value, nor is there any diſagreement but about the uſe.

No deſire can be formed which riches do not aſſiſt to gratify. He that places his happineſs in ſplendid equipage or numerous dependants, in refined praiſe or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curioſities or the revels of luxury, in ſplendid edifices or wide plantations, muſt ſtill either by birth or acquiſition poſſeſs riches. They may be conſidered as the elemental principles of pleaſure, which may be combined with endleſs diverſity; as the eſſential and neceſſary ſubſtance, of which only the form is left to be adjuſted by choice.

The neceſſity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almoſt every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furniſhed with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reaſonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but thoſe who were zealous to deſerve what they were eager to poſſeſs, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the eaſe or happineſs of others. To have riches and to have merit would then

have been the ſame, and ſucceſs might reaſonably have been conſidered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wiſhes of men keep a ſtated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and deſire wealth, who can never procure it by honeſt induſtry or uſeful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthleſs, will be content to want.

A little enquiry will diſcover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the ſteeps of labour; what wiſdom and virtue ſcarcely receive at the cloſe of life, as the recompence of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of ſubtilty and diſhoneſty by more expeditious and compendious meaſures: the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falſehood; and the poſſeſſions of ignorance and imbecillity are eaſily ſtolen away by the conveyances of ſecret artifice, or ſeized by the gripe of unreſiſted violence.

It is likewiſe not hard to diſcover, that riches always procure protection for themſelves, that they dazzle the eyes of enquiry, divert the celerity of purſuit, or appeaſe the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is inconteſtably known to have large poſſeſſions, very few think it requiſite to enquire by what practices they were obtained; the reſentment of mankind rages only againſt the ſtruggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has ſurmounted the firſt oppoſition, it is afterwards ſupported by favour, and animated by applauſe.

The

The proſpect of gaining ſpeedily what is ardently deſired, and the certainty of obtaining by every acceſſion of advantage an addition of ſecurity, have ſo far prevailed upon the paſſions of mankind, that the peace of life is deſtroyed by a general and inceſſant ſtruggle for riches. It is obſerved of gold, by an old epigrammatiſt, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in ſorrow.* There is no condition which is not diſquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political eſtimate between thoſe who are practiſing fraud, and thoſe who are repelling it.

If we conſider the preſent ſtate of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is loſt among mankind, that no man ventures to act, where money can be endangered, upon the faith of another. It is impoſſible to ſee the long ſcrolls in which every contract is included, with all their appendages of ſeals and atteſtation, without wondering at the depravity of thoſe beings, who muſt be reſtrained from violation of promiſe by ſuch formal and publick evidences, and precluded from equivocation and ſubterfuge by ſuch punctilious minuteneſs. Among all the ſatires to which folly and wickedneſs have given occaſion, none is equally ſevere with a bond or a ſettlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the firſt view irreconcileable with the laws of virtue; ſome are openly flagitious, and practiſed not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and juſtice; and the reſt are on every ſide ſo entangled with dubious tendencies, and ſo beſet with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of thoſe who are not

yet abandoned, are able to preſerve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right leſs than others, and have ſooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteriſticks of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of poſſeſſions: ſtrife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent paſſion was ſtilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but ſuch times can return no more. Community of poſſeſſion muſt include ſpontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour, will be of right the property of him by whoſe labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleaſure or to affluence muſt be procured either by ſlow induſtry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incite to more ſafe and more ſpeedy methods, who ſtrive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to ſhare the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In later ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is expoſed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have ſuppreſſed deſire by cutting off the poſſibility of gratification, and ſecured their peace by deſtroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet ſubjection. But by debarring themſelves from evil, they have reſcinded many opportunities of good; they have too often ſunk into inactivity and uſeleſſneſs; and though they have forborn

forborn to injure ſociety, have not fully paid their contributions to its happineſs.

While riches are ſo neceſſary to preſent convenience, and ſo much more eaſily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be ſecured from yielding to the continual impulſe of covetouſneſs by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only againſt reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the oppoſite ſcale is charged with juſtice, veracity, and piety.

NUMB. 132. SATURDAY, *June* 22, 1751.

——Dociles imitandis
Turpibus ac pravis omnes ſumus.—— JUV.

The mind of mortals, in perverſeneſs ſtrong,
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

To the RAMBLER.

Mr. RAMBLER,

I Was bred a ſcholar, and after the uſual courſe of education, found it neceſſary to employ for the ſupport of life that learning which I had almoſt exhauſted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative profeſſions drew my regard with equal attraction; each preſented ideas which excited my curioſity, and each impoſed duties which terrified my apprehenſion.

There is no temper more unpropitious to intereſt than deſultory application and unlimited enquiry, by which the deſires are held in a perpetual

equipoiſe, and the mind fluctuates between different purpoſes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often ſpent the firſt hours of the day, in conſidering to what ſtudy I ſhould devote the reſt; and at laſt ſnatched up any author that lay upon the table, or perhaps fled to a coffee-houſe for deliverance from the anxiety of irreſolution, and the gloomineſs of ſolitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly leſs, till I was rouſed from my literary ſlumber by a creditor, whoſe importunity obliged me to pacify him with ſo large a ſum that what remained was not ſufficient to ſupport me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myſelf in danger of diſtreſs, and obliged to endeavour after ſome certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their laſt acre in a drawer, and, without the leaſt interruption of their tranquillity or abatement of their expences, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to ſuch dignity of imprudence, or ſuch exaltation above the cares and neceſſities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might ſet me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out ſome final ſcheme of laſting advantage.

My friends were ſtruck with honeſt ſolicitude, and immediately promiſed their endeavours for my extrication. They did not ſuffer their kindneſs to languiſh by delay, but proſecuted their enquiries

enquiries with ſuch ſucceſs, that in leſs than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of proſpects.

I had however no time for long pauſes of conſideration; and therefore ſoon reſolved to accept the office of inſtructing a young nobleman in the houſe of his father: I went to the ſeat at which the family then happened to reſide, was received with great politeneſs, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were ſuch as I ſhould willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the reſpect with which I was treated flattered my vanity; and perhaps the ſplendor of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the propoſals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no deſire to gain more than I ſhould truly deſerve, I very diligently proſecuted my undertaking, and had the ſatisfaction of diſcovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehenſion, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wiſe and uſeful counſellor to the ſtate, though my labours were ſomewhat obſtructed by want of authority, and the neceſſity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man, whoſe imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a ſtudious life had made all the common amuſements inſipid and contemptible, it was not very eaſy to ſuppreſs his indignation, when he ſaw himſelf forſaken in the midſt of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch

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an inſect, and found his inſtructions debarred from acceſs to the intellectual faculties by the memory of a childiſh frolick, or the deſire of a new plaything.

Thoſe vexations would have recurred leſs frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he ſhould be excuſed from a taſk as a reward for ſome petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another to gratify herſelf or her viſitants with his vivacity, ſhewn him that every thing was more pleaſing and more important than knowledge, and that ſtudy was to be endured rather than choſen, and was only the buſineſs of thoſe hours which pleaſure left vacant, or diſcipline uſurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of theſe frequent avocations; but was anſwered, that rank and fortune might reaſonably hope for ſome indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progreſs would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; and that with the ſucceſs which ſatisfied every body elſe, I might ſurely ſatisfy myſelf. I had now done my duty, and without more remonſtrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they would be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my ſcholar began to feel the quick impulſes of curioſity, and the honeſt ardour of ſtudious ambition.

At length it was reſolved to paſs a winter in *London*. The lady had too much fondneſs for her ſon to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuſe her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the publick. I remonſtrated againſt too early an acquaintance

quaintance with cards and company; but with a ſoft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, ſhe ſaid that he had been already confined too long to ſolitary ſtudy. and it was now time to ſhew him the world; nothing was more a brand of meanneſs than baſhful timidity; gay freedom and elegant aſſurance were only to be gained by mixed converſation, a frequent intercourſe with ſtrangers, and a timely introduction to ſplendid aſſemblies; and ſhe had more than once obſerved, that his forwardneſs and complaiſance began to deſert him, that he was ſilent when he had not ſomething of conſequence to ſay, bluſhed whenever he happened to find himſelf miſtaken, and hung down his head in the preſence of the ladies, without the readineſs of reply and activity of officiouſneſs remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in *London*.

Again I found reſiſtance hopeleſs, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayeſt and moſt magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for ſeveral years lived at a remote ſeat, was immediately dazzled with a thouſand beams of novelty and ſhew. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleaſure that paſſed before him, and it was impoſſible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the ſounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was diſturbed by a rich ſuit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accuſtomed to a plain dreſs, he could not at firſt ſurvey without ecſtacy.

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The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more diſtant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiſcriminately introduced to all, that he might accuſtom himſelf to change of faces, and be rid with ſpeed of his ruſtick diffidence. He ſoon endeared himſelf to his mother by the ſpeedy acquiſition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes ſparkle at a numerous aſſembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other teſt of principles or actions than the quality of thoſe to whom they are aſcribed. He begins already to look down on me with ſuperiority, and ſubmits to one ſhort leſſon in a week, as an act of condeſcenſion rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot ſpeak *French*; and having formerly learned a few familiar phraſes from his ſiſter's governeſs, he is every day ſoliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his converſation. I am not yet inſulted, but find myſelf likely to become ſoon a ſuperfluous incumbrance, for my ſcholar has now no time for ſcience, or for virtue: and the lady yeſterday declared him ſo much the favourite of every company, that ſhe was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

NUMB. 133. TUESDAY, *June* 25, 1751.

Magna quidem ſacris quæ dat præcepta libellis
Victrix fortunæ ſapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,
Nec jactare jugum vitâ didicere magiſtrâ. JUV.

Let Stoicks ethicks haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance:
Yet happy thoſe, though not ſo learn'd are thought,
Whom life inſtructs, who by experience taught,
For new to come from paſt misfortunes look,
Nor ſhake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis ſhook.
CREECH.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have ſhewn, by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of *Victoria* not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philoſopher: I ſhall therefore continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my ſtrength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother diſmiſſed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expoſe my face too ſoon to the ſun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The proſpect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had ſo long been accuſtomed to praiſe and ecſtacy; but it was ſome ſatisfaction to be ſeparated from my mother, who was inceſſantly ringing the knell

of

of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolance, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condeſcended to viſit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thouſand trifling enquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, ſhe generally concluded with a ſigh that I ſhould never more be fit to be ſeen.

At laſt I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was impriſoned in my chamber as a criminal, whoſe appearance would diſgrace my friends, and condemned to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiouſneſs of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the ſcars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former ſmoothneſs; and ſometimes I was puniſhed with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new ſkin. The coſmetick ſcience was exhauſted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me reſt at laſt, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toaſt, whoſe fortune ſhe conſidered as a hopeleſs game, no longer worthy of ſolicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the ſudden blaſt of diſeaſe wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed ſufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her

her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleaſure, and her nights with hope; all that gave gladneſs to the preſent hour, or brightened her proſpects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whoſe attention has been divided by diverſity of purſuits, and who has not been accuſtomed to derive from others much of his happineſs, to image to himſelf ſuch helpleſs deſtitution, ſuch diſmal inanity. Every object of pleaſing contemplation is at once ſnatched away, and the ſoul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent deſire; the faculties of anticipation ſlumber in deſpondency, or the powers of pleaſure mutiny for employment.

I was ſo little able to find entertainment for myſelf, that I was forced in a ſhort time to venture abroad, as the ſolitary ſavage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of diſgrace into aſſemblies, where I had lately ſparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had miſrepreſented me to myſelf, and that the remains of my former face might yet have ſome attraction and influence: But the firſt circle of viſits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practiſe the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of ſighs and praiſes, or be ſoothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my propoſals were unregarded; the narrowneſs of my knowledge, and the meanneſs

neſs of my ſentiments, were eaſily diſcovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged againſt the judgment; and it was obſerved, by thoſe who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my underſtanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is ſcarcely to be imagined how ſoon the mind ſinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long conſidered all who approached me as vaſſals condemned to regulate their pleaſures by my eyes, and harraſs their inventions for my entertainment, was in leſs than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with profeſſions of obligation; to catch with eagerneſs at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiouſneſs of dependence, leſt any little civility that was paid me ſhould paſs unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleaſing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more ſupportable than the inſolence of my own ſex. For the firſt ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a ſingle houſe in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my eſcape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by ſome I have been told in expreſs terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whiſpered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a waſh that would ſmooth the ſkin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some ſoothed me with the obſervation that none can tell how ſoon my caſe may be her own; and ſome thought it proper to receive me with

with mournful tenderneſs, formal condolance, and conſolatory blandiſhments.

Thus was I every day harraſſed with all the ſtratagems of well-bred malignity; yet inſolence was more tolerable than ſolitude, and I therefore perſiſted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of reſentment or depreſſion. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their ſuperiority would end with its novelty; and that I ſhould be ſuffered to glide along in my preſent form among the nameleſs multitude whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of reſiſtance and effort of perſeverance, I found more ſenſibly the want of thoſe entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day roſe upon me without an engagement, and the evening cloſed in its natural gloom, without ſummoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amuſements for me, and I had no power of amuſing myſelf. Idleneſs expoſed me to melancholy, and life began to languiſh in motionleſs indifference.

Miſery and ſhame are nearly allied. It was not without many ſtruggles that I prevailed on myſelf to confeſs my uneaſineſs to *Euphemia*, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at laſt laid my calamities before her, rather to eaſe my heart than receive aſſiſtance. "We muſt diſtinguiſh, ſaid ſhe, my *Victoria*, "thoſe evils which are impoſed by providence,

" from thoſe to which we ourſelves give the
" power of hurting us. Of your calamity, a ſmall
" part is the infliction of heaven, the reſt is little
" more than the corroſion of idle diſcontent. You
" have loſt that which may indeed ſometimes
" contribute to happineſs, but to which happineſs
" is by no means inſeparably annexed. You
" have loſt what the greater number of the hu-
" man race never have poſſeſſed; what thoſe on
" whom it is beſtowed for the moſt part poſſeſs
" in vain; and what you, while it was yours,
" knew not how to uſe: You have only loſt early
" what the laws of nature forbid you to keep
" long, and have loſt it while your mind is yet
" flexible, and while you have time to ſubſtitute
" more valuable and more durable excellencies.
" Conſider yourſelf, my *Victoria*, as a being born
" to know, to reaſon, and to act; riſe at once
" from your dream of melancholy to wiſdom
" and to piety; you will find that there are other
" charms than thoſe of beauty, and other joys
" than the praiſe of fools."

I am, Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

NUMB. 134. SATURDAY, *June* 29, 1751.

Quis ſcit, an adjiciant hodiernæ craſtinæ ſummæ
Tempora Dî ſuperi!

HOR.

Who knows if Heav'n, with ever-bounteous pow'r,
Shall add to-morrow to the preſent hour? FRANCIS.

I Sat yeſterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various ſubjects that occurred to my imagination, I ſhould beſtow the paper of to-day. After a ſhort effort of meditation by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irreſolute, my ideas wandered from the firſt intention, and I rather wiſhed to think, than thought, upon any ſettled ſubject; till at laſt I was awakened from this dream of ſtudy by a ſummons from the preſs: the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purpoſing to provide, and, however dubious or ſluggiſh, I was now neceſſitated to write.

Though to a writer whoſe deſign is ſo comprehenſive and miſcellaneous, that he may accommodate himſelf with a topick from every ſcene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his taſk to be obliged to a ſudden compoſition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myſelf for having ſo long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleneſs increaſed the difficulty. There was however ſome pleaſure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was neceſſary, might ſtill congratulate myſelf upon my ſuperiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or reſolution

recover the opportunities which have ſlipped away; and who are condemned by their own careleſneſs to hopeleſs calamity and barren ſorrow.

The folly of allowing ourſelves to delay what we know cannot be finally eſcaped, is one of the general weakneſſes, which, in ſpite of the inſtruction of moraliſts, and the remonſtrances of reaſon, prevail to a greater or leſs degree in every mind: even they who moſt ſteadily withſtand it, find it, if not the moſt violent, the moſt pertinacious of their paſſions, always renewing its attacks, and though often vanquiſhed, never deſtroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time preſent, and to be moſt ſolicitous for that which is by its nearneſs enabled to make the ſtrongeſt impreſſions. When therefore any ſharp pain is to be ſuffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can ſcarcely exempt ourſelves wholly from the ſeducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring ſome ſupport or advantage which we now want; and are eaſily perſuaded, that the moment of neceſſity which we deſire never to arrive, is at a great diſtance from us.

Thus life is languiſhed away in the gloom of anxiety, and conſumed in collecting reſolution which the next morning diſſipates; in forming purpoſes which we ſcarcely hope to keep, and reconciling ourſelves to our own cowardice by excuſes, which, while we admit them, we know to be abſurd. Our firmneſs is by the continual contemplation of miſery hourly impaired; every ſubmiſſion to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waſte that time in which the evil we dread

dread might have been ſuffered and ſurmounted, but even where procraſtination produces no abſolute increaſe of our difficulties, make them leſs ſuperable to ourſelves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wiſe to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the miſchiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and ſuffer only their real malignity without the conflicts of doubt and anguiſh of anticipation.

To act is far eaſier than to ſuffer, yet we every day ſee the progreſs of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleneſs hinders them from enjoying. The caſe of *Tantalus*, in the region of poetick puniſhment, was ſomewhat to be pitied, becauſe the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderneſs can be claimed by thoſe who, though perhaps they ſuffer the pains of *Tantalus*, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneaſineſs which only vacancy and ſuſpicion expoſe them to feel, and complaints of diſtreſſes which it is in their own power to remove. Lazineſs is commonly aſſociated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infuſing deſpair of ſucceſs; or the frequent failure of irreſolute ſtruggles, and the conſtant deſire of avoiding labour, impreſs by degrees falſe terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full poſſeſſion of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon viſions of calamity, ſuch as, if they are

not diſſipated by uſeful employment, will ſoon overcaſt it with horrors, and imbitter life not only with thoſe miſeries by which all earthly beings are really more or leſs tormented, but with thoſe which do not yet exiſt, and which can only be diſcerned by the perſpicacity of cowardice.

Among all who ſacrifice future advantage to preſent inclination, ſcarcely any gain ſo little as thoſe that ſuffer themſelves to freeze in idleneſs. Others are corrupted by ſome enjoyment of more or leſs power to gratify the paſſions; but to neglect our duties, merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is ſurely to ſink under weak temptations. Idleneſs never can ſecure tranquillity; the call of reaſon and of conſcience will pierce the cloſeſt pavilion of the ſluggard, and, though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from ſleep. Thoſe moments which he cannot reſolve to make uſeful by devoting them to the great buſineſs of his being, will ſtill be uſurped by powers that will not leave them to his diſpoſal; remorſe and vexation will ſeize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is ſo deſirous to appropriate.

There are other cauſes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute diſcernment. He to whom many objects of purſuit ariſe at the ſame time, will frequently heſitate between different deſires, till a rival has precluded him, or change his courſe as new attractions prevail, and harraſs himſelf without advancing. He who ſees different ways to the ſame end, will, unleſs he watches carefully over his

his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the compariſon of probabilities, and the adjuſtment of expedients, and pauſe in the choice of his road, till ſome accident intercepts his journey. He whoſe penetration extends to remote conſequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any deſign, diſcovers new proſpects of advantage, and poſſibilities of improvement, will not eaſily be perſuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will ſuperadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purpoſes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own ſcheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that reſolves to unite all the beauties of ſituation in a new purchaſe, muſt waſte his life in roving to no purpoſe from province to province. He that hopes in the ſame houſe to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and ſtudy *Palladio*, but will never lay a ſtone. He will attempt a treatiſe on ſome important ſubject, and amaſs materials, conſult authors, and ſtudy all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himſelf qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not eaſily be content without it; and ſince perfection cannot be reached, will loſe the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much ſhorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active proſecution of whatever he is deſirous to perform. It is true, that no diligence can aſcertain ſucceſs; death may intercept the ſwifteſt

career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honeſt undertaking, has at leaſt the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he miſſed the victory.

NUMB. 135. TUESDAY, *July* 2, 1751.

Cælum, non animum mutant. HOR.

Place may be chang'd; but who can change his mind?

IT is impoſſible to take a view on any ſide, or obſerve any of the various claſſes that form the great community of the world, without diſcovering the influence of example; and admitting with new conviction the obſervation of *Ariſtotle*, that *man is an imitative being*. The greater, far the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curioſity after new diſcoveries, or ambition of truſting themſelves to their own conduct. And, of thoſe who break the ranks and diſorder the uniformity of the march, moſt return in a ſhort time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and ſteady ſatisfaction of ſecurity before the frolicks of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In queſtions difficult or dangerous it is indeed natural to repoſe upon authority, and, when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of thoſe whom we do not in general think wiſer than ourſelves. Very few have abilities requiſite for the diſcovery of abſtruſe truth; and of thoſe few ſome want leiſure, and ſome reſolution. But it is not ſo eaſy to find the reaſon of the univerſal ſubmiſſion to precedent where every man might ſafely

ſafely judge for himſelf; where no irreparable loſs can be hazarded, nor any miſchief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful paſſions are not awakened; the mere pleaſure of acknowledging no ſuperior might produce ſlight ſingularities, or the hope of gaining ſome new degree of happineſs awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any caſe the ſhackles of preſcription could be wholly ſhaken off, and the imagination left to act without controul, on what occaſion ſhould it be expected, but in the ſelection of lawful pleaſure? Pleaſure, of which the eſſence is choice; which compulſion diſſociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the ſmiles of liberty. Yet we ſee that the ſenſes, as well as the reaſon, are regulated by credulity; and that moſt will feel, or ſay that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of univerſal migration, when almoſt every one, conſiderable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earneſtneſs of diſtreſs to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of ſpeedy departure, or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to enquire what happineſs is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this ſtated receſſion. Of the birds of paſſage, ſome follow the ſummer, and ſome the winter, becauſe they live upon ſuſtenance which only ſummer or winter can ſupply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to aſſign the reaſon, becauſe they

do not appear either to find or ſeek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of theſe fugitives may have heard of men whoſe continual wiſh was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to ſteal away from obſervation, to forſake the croud, and delight themſelves with *the ſociety of ſolitude*. There is indeed ſcarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happineſs of rural privacy, and delighted himſelf and his reader with the melody of birds, the whiſper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for extent of capacity, or greatneſs of exploits, that has not left behind him ſome memorials of lonely wiſdom, and ſilent dignity.

But almoſt all abſurdity of conduct ariſes from the imitation of thoſe whom we cannot reſemble. Thoſe who thus teſtified their wearineſs of tumult and hurry, and haſted with ſo much eagerneſs to the leiſure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the preſſure of difficult employments, harraſſed with importunities, and diſtracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engroſſed by ſpeculative ſciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their ſearches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reaſonings diſjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reaſonably fly to that eaſe and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The ſtateſman who devoted the greater part of his time to the publick, was deſirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours,

hours, and ſtunned with acclamations, gladly ſnatched an interval of ſilence and relaxation. The naturaliſt was unhappy where the works of providence were not always before him. The reaſoner could adjuſt his ſyſtems only where his mind was free from the intruſion of outward objects.

Such examples of ſolitude very few of thoſe who are now haſtening from the town, have any pretenſions to plead in their own juſtification, ſince they cannot pretend either wearineſs of labour, or deſire of knowledge. They purpoſe nothing more than to quit one ſcene of idleneſs for another, and after having trifled in publick, to ſleep in ſecrecy. The utmoſt that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculouſneſs to obſcurity, and the privilege of having fewer witneſſes to a life of folly. He who is not ſufficiently important to be diſturbed in his purſuits, but ſpends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or deſires, can have nothing to demand of ſhades and valleys. As bravery is ſaid to be a panoply, inſignificancy is always a ſhelter.

There are however pleaſures and advantages in a rural ſituation, which are not confined to philoſophers and heroes. The freſhneſs of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhauſted variety which ſummer ſcatters upon the earth, may eaſily give delight to an unlearned ſpectator. It is not neceſſary that he who looks with pleaſure on the colours of a flower ſhould ſtudy the principles of vegetation, or that the *Ptolemaick* and *Copernican* ſyſtem ſhould

be compared before the light of the ſun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itſelf a ſource of gratification, and *Milton* juſtly obſerves, that to him who has been long pent up in cities no rural object can be preſented, which will not delight or refreſh ſome of his ſenſes.

Yet even theſe eaſy pleaſures are miſſed by the greater part of thoſe who waſte their ſummer in the country. Should any man purſue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them liſtening to *Philomel*, loitering in woods, or plucking daiſies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruſcations of declining day. Some will be diſcovered at a window by the road ſide, rejoicing when a new cloud of duſt gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary ſupply of converſation, and a ſhort relief from the tedioufneſs of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houſes as in the reſt of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new ſtreet in *London* might have given them. The ſame ſet of acquaintances ſtill ſettle together, and the form of life is not otherwiſe diverſified than by doing the ſame things in a different place. They pay and receive viſits in the uſual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the ſame tattle, and dance with the ſame partners; nor can they at their return to their former habitation congratulate themſelves on any other advantage, than that they have paſſed their time like others of the ſame rank; and have the ſame right to talk of

the happineſs and beauty of the country, of happineſs which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to ſubſiſt upon its own ſtock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed underſtandings ſo fertile and comprehenſive, that they can always feed reflection with new ſupplies, and ſuffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amuſements; as ſome cities have within their own walls encloſed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a ſiege. But others live only from day to day, and muſt be conſtantly enabled, by foreign ſupplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and ſtupidity. Such could not indeed be blamed for hovering within reach of their uſual pleaſure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not thoſe who go into the country, merely becauſe they dare not be left alone at home, boaſt their love of nature, or their qualifications for ſolitude; nor pretend that they receive inſtantaneous infuſions of wiſdom from the *Dryads*, and are able, when they leave ſmoke and noiſe behind, to act, or think, or reaſon for themſelves.

NUMB. 136. SATURDAY, *July* 6, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζῃ. HOM.

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart detests him as the gates of *Hell*. POPE.

THE regard which they whoſe abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the reſt of mankind, ariſes in a great meaſure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by miſers or by robbers; but the honours of a laſting name and the veneration of diſtant ages only the ſons of learning have the power of beſtowing. While therefore it continues one of the characteriſticks of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the ſearch after happineſs, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who conſiders himſelf as conſtituted the ultimate judge of diſputable characters, and entruſted with the diſtribution of the laſt terreſtrial rewards of merit, ought to ſummon all his fortitude to the ſupport of his integrity, and reſolve to diſcharge an office of ſuch dignity with the moſt vigilant caution and ſcrupulous juſtice. To deliver examples to poſterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no ſlight or trivial undertaking; nor is it eaſy to commit more atrocious treaſon againſt the great republick of humanity, than by falſifying its records and miſguiding its decrees.

To

To ſcatter praiſe or blame without regard to juſtice, is to deſtroy the diſtinction of good and evil. Many have no other teſt of actions than general opinion; and all are ſo far influenced by a ſenſe of reputation, that they are often reſtrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have loſt their power; nor can any ſpecies of proſtitution promote general depravity more than that which deſtroys the force of praiſe, by ſhewing that it may be acquired without deſerving it, and which, by ſetting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets looſe the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatneſs is controlled.

Praiſe, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its ſcarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raiſe expectation, or animate enterprize. It is therefore not only neceſſary, that wickedneſs, even when it is not ſafe to cenſure it, be denied applauſe, but that goodneſs be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands, due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not ſuffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boaſt only petty ſervices and eaſy virtues.

Had theſe maxims been univerſally received, how much would have been added to the taſk of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhauſted. How few of theſe initial panegyricks had appeared, if the author had been obliged firſt to find a man of virtue, then to diſtinguiſh the diſtinct ſpecies and degree of his deſert, and at laſt to pay him only the honours which he might juſtly claim. It is much

much eaſier to learn the name of the laſt man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of ſome of his domeſticks the privilege of addreſſing him, or in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an addreſs without any previous ſolicitation; and after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philoſophy has aſſigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly ſaid, did not the fear of giving pain to his modeſty repreſs the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has ſo much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiſcuous dedication; for what credit can he expect who profeſſes himſelf the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and without ſhame or ſcruple celebrates the worthleſs, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppreſſive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and lovelineſs to innocence? Every other kind of adulteration, however ſhameful, however miſchievous, is leſs deteſtable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the ſtamp of literary ſanction upon the droſs and refuſe of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why ſhould he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the ſhame of falſehood? The unhappy dedicator is ſeldom without ſome motives which obſtruct, though not deſtroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppreſſed

preſſed by miſeries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a ſhort gratification, with which nothing but ſtupidity could diſpoſe him to be pleaſed. The real ſatisfaction which praiſe can afford is by repeating aloud the whiſpers of conſcience, and by ſhewing us that we have not endeavoured to deſerve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, ſatire and reproach; the celebration of theſe virtues which we feel ourſelves to want, can only impreſs a quicker ſenſe of our own defects, and ſhow that we have not yet ſatisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to obſerve how much fiction muſt contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet ſometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiaſt has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapleſs author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the preſs, has waited long before any one would pay the price of proſtitution, or conſent to hear the praiſes deſtined to inſure his name againſt the caſualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented againſt the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parſimonious prudence has declined expence, or honeſt indignation rejected falſehood. But if at laſt, after long enquiry and innumerable diſappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taſte, a ſtateſman deſirous of knowing how a friendly hiſtorian will repreſent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world ſome memorial

morial of her wit and beauty, ſuch weakneſs cannot be cenſured as an inſtance of enormous depravity. The wiſeſt man may by a diligent ſolicitor be ſurpriſed in the hour of weakneſs, and perſuaded to ſolace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the muſick of flattery.

To cenſure all dedications as adulatory and ſervile, would diſcover rather envy than juſtice. Praiſe is the tribute of merit, and he that has inconteſtably diſtinguiſhed himſelf by any publick performance, has a right to all the honours which the publick can beſtow. To men thus raiſed above the reſt of the community, there is no need that the book or its author ſhould have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deſerve reſpect, is ſufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the ſame regard from particular perſons private virtue and leſs conſpicuous excellence may be ſometimes entitled. An author may with great propriety inſcribe his work to him by whoſe encouragement it was undertaken, or by whoſe liberality he has been enabled to proſecute it, and he may juſtly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to reſcue merit from obſcurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te cludere: miſce
Ergo aliquid noſtris de moribus.——

Thus much I will indulge thee for thy eaſe,
And mingle ſomething of our times to pleaſe.

DRYDEN jun.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblameably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praiſes only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatneſs,

greatneſs, be cautious leſt his deſire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to pleaſe ourſelves with the future than the paſt, and while we luxuriate in expectation, may be eaſily perſuaded to purchaſe what we yet rate only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views or perſonal regard can diſcharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithſtanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be juſtly propoſed to the imitation of others, and whom therefore he muſt find ſome other way of rewarding than by publick celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of ſeducement, but it ſurely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or perſuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many upon falſe principles of gratitude have ventured to extol wretches whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the ſpecies, and whom they would likewiſe have beheld with the ſame ſcorn had they not been hired to diſhoneſt approbation.

To encourage merit with praiſe is the great buſineſs of literature; but praiſe muſt loſe its influence, by unjuſt or negligent diſtribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with miſapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with ſquandering on guilt the recompence of virtue.

NUMB. 137. TUESDAY, *July* 9, 1751.

Dum vitant ſtulti vitia, in contraria currunt. HOR.

——Whilſt fools one vice condemn,
They run into the oppoſite extreme. CREECH.

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often obſerved. The awful ſtillneſs of attention, with which the mind is overſpread at the firſt view of an unexpected effect, ceaſes when we have leiſure to diſentangle complications and inveſtigate cauſes. Wonder is a pauſe of reaſon, a ſudden ceſſation of the mental progreſs, which laſts only while the underſtanding is fixed upon ſome ſingle idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the firſt agent to the laſt conſequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for thoſe who have never accuſtomed themſelves to the labour of enquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conqueſts over difficulty, to ſleep in the gloomy quieſcence of aſtoniſhment, without any effort to animate enquiry or diſpel obſcurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they conſider as too high to be reached, or too extenſive to be comprehended; they therefore content themſelves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and reſign the pleaſure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious ſtudy or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanick art, many are of a form ſo different from that of their firſt materials, and many conſiſt of parts ſo numerous and

and ſo nicely adapted to each other, that it is not poſſible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the ſhops of artificers, obſerve the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progreſs of a manufacture through the different hands that, in ſucceſſion to each other, contribute to its perfection, we ſoon diſcover that every ſingle man has an eaſy taſk, and that the extremes however remote of natural rudeneſs and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The ſame is the ſtate of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a ſecond view; but if we have ſkill ſufficient to analiſe them into ſimple principles it will be diſcovered that our fear was groundleſs. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally juſt in ſcience as in policy. Complication is a ſpecies of confederacy, which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the moſt active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is ſeparately weak, and which may therefore be quickly ſubdued if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as *Locke* has obſerved, is to attempt but little at a time. The wideſt excurſions of the mind are made by ſhort flights frequently repeated; the moſt lofty fabricks of ſcience are formed by the continued accumulation of ſingle propoſitions.

It often happens, whatever be the cauſe, that impatience of labour or dread of miſcarriage, ſeizes thoſe who are moſt diſtinguiſhed for quickneſs of apprehenſion;

apprehenſion; and that they who might with greateſt reaſon promiſe themſelves victory, are leaſt willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid aſleep by lazineſs or diſſipated by pleaſures, can ariſe only from confuſed and general views, ſuch as negligence ſnatches in haſte, or from the diſappointment of the firſt hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of ſcience will be pierced by a careleſs glance, or the eminences of fame aſcended without labour, is to expect a particular privilege, a power denied to the reſt of mankind; but to ſuppoſe that the maze is inſcrutable to diligence, or the heights inacceſſible to perſeverance, is to ſubmit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary ſhackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by diſcovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the ſucceſs of ſuch undertakings perhaps ſome degree of fortuitous happineſs is neceſſary, which no man can promiſe or procure to himſelf; and therefore doubt and irreſolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abyſſes of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to purſue a path already beaten, and to trample obſtacles which others have demoliſhed, why ſhould any man ſo much diſtruſt his own intellect as to imagine himſelf unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wiſhed that they who devote their lives to ſtudy would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and conſider nothing

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as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to ſcience and to life, and unite ſome knowledge of the preſent world to their acquaintance with paſt ages and remote events.

Nothing has ſo much expoſed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themſelves. Thoſe who have been taught to conſider the inſtitutions of the ſchools, as giving the laſt perfection to human abilities, are ſurprized to ſee men wrinkled with ſtudy, yet wanting to be inſtructed in the minute circumſtances of propriety, or the neceſſary forms of daily tranſaction; and quickly ſhake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the reſt of mankind.

Books, ſays Bacon, *can never teach the uſe of books*. The ſtudent muſt learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his ſpeculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purpoſes of life.

It is too common for thoſe who have been bred to ſcholaſtick profeſſions, and paſſed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to diſregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they ſhall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for inſtruction. They therefore ſtep out from their cells into the open world, with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and ſcorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whoſe manners they muſt imitate, and with

with whoſe opinions they muſt comply, if they deſire to paſs their time happily among them.

To leſſen that diſdain with which ſcholars are inclined to look on the common buſineſs of the world, and the unwillingneſs with which they condeſcend to learn what is not to be found in any ſyſtem of philoſophy, it may be neceſſary to conſider that though admiration is excited by abſtruſe reſearches and remote diſcoveries, yet pleaſure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by ſofter accompliſhments, and qualities more eaſily communicable to thoſe about us. He that can only converſe upon queſtions, about which only a ſmall part of mankind has knowledge ſufficient to make them curious, muſt loſe his days in unſocial ſilence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be uſeful in great occaſions, may die without exerting his abilities, and ſtand a helpleſs ſpectator of a thouſand vexations which fret away happineſs, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readineſs of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to ſet him above the want of hourly aſſiſtance, or to extinguiſh the deſire of fond endearments, and tender officiouſneſs; and therefore, no one ſhould think it unneceſſary to learn thoſe arts by which friendſhip may be gained. Kindneſs is preſerved by a conſtant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleaſures; but ſuch benefits only can be beſtowed, as others are capable to receive, and ſuch pleaſures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this deſcent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be loſt; for the condeſcenſions of learning

learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to uſe the ſimile of *Longinus*, like the ſun in his evening declination, he remits his ſplendor but retains his magnitude, and pleaſes more though he dazzles leſs.

NUMB. 138. SATURDAY, *July* 13, 1751.

——tecum libeat mihi ſordida rura
Atque humiles habitare caſas, et figere cervos. VIRG.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural ſports.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and buſy part of mankind, is juſtified by daily obſervation, ſince moſt of thoſe who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I ſuppoſe you do not intend to repreſent the practice itſelf as ridiculous, or to declare that he whoſe condition puts the diſtribution of his time into his own power may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, diſplays the inexhauſtible varieties of nature, and ſupplies the philoſophical mind with matter for admiration and enquiry, never was denied; but my curioſity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an inſect, or the ſtructure of a neſt; I am generally employed upon human manners, and therefore fill up the months of rural leiſure

leiſure with remarks on thoſe who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently viſit thoſe regions of negligence and liberty, they might diverſify their repreſentations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute diſcriminations which diſtinguiſh one from another are for the moſt part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiſcuous converſe, as angular bodies and uneven ſurfaces loſe their points and aſperities by frequent attrition againſt one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of faſhion, the influence of example, the deſire of applauſe, and the dread of cenſure, obſtruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its firſt efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are ſo ſtrong as to grow up into habits when they muſt ſtruggle with the conſtant oppoſition of ſettled forms and eſtabliſhed cuſtoms. But in the country every man is a ſeparate and independent being: ſolitude flatters irregularity with hopes of ſecrecy: and wealth removed from the mortification of compariſon, and the awe of equality, ſwells into contemptuous confidence, and ſets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulſes of nature act unreſtrained, and the diſpoſition dares to ſhew itſelf in its true form, without any diſguiſe of hypocriſy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to pleaſe himſelf, without enquiring how far he deviates from the general practice,

tice, or conſidering others as entitled to any account of his ſentiments or actions. If he builds or demoliſhes, opens or encloſes, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of thoſe who are ſkilled in perſpective or architecture, it is ſufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor ſpends his own money on his own grounds.

For this reaſon it is not very common to want ſubjects for rural converſation. Almoſt every man is daily doing ſomething which produces merriment, wonder, or reſentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from reſtraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and ſuffers the natural character to diffuſe itſelf to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of publick obſervation, would have been only vented among ſervants and domeſticks, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province, and inſtead of terminating in the deſtruction of china ware and glaſſes, ruins tenants, diſpoſſeſſes cottagers, and harraſſes villages with actions of treſpaſs and bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that even without violent paſſions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a ruſtick life produces remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reſide, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the ſame cut and colour; another for ſhaking hands with thoſe that viſit her; and a third for unſhaken reſolution never to let tea or coffee enter her houſe.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none ſo worthy of attention

as that of Mrs. *Buſy*, a widow, who loſt her huſband in her thirtieth year, and has ſince paſſed her time at the manor-houſe, in the government of her children, and the management of the eſtate.

Mrs. *Buſy* was married at eighteen, from a boarding-ſchool, where ſhe had paſſed her time like other young ladies in needle-work, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When ſhe became a bride ſhe ſpent one winter with her huſband in town, where having no idea of any converſation beyond the formalities of a viſit, ſhe found nothing to engage her paſſions; and when ſhe had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and ſeen the Monument, the Tombs, and the Tower, ſhe concluded that *London* had nothing more to ſhow, and wondered that when women had once ſeen the world they could not be content to ſtay at home. She therefore went willingly to the ancient ſeat, and for ſome years ſtudied houſewifery under Mr. *Buſy*'s mother, with ſo much aſſiduity, that the old lady, when ſhe died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a ſoup-diſh, two beakers, and a cheſt of table-linen ſpun by herſelf.

Mr. *Buſy* finding the economical qualities of his lady, reſigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never viſited his eſtates, but to deſtroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed ſuch devaſtations in the rage of pleaſure, that ſome of his tenants refuſed to hold their lands at the uſual rent. Their landlady perſuaded them to be ſatisfied, and entreated her huſband to diſmiſs his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and corn conſumed by the horſes, and remonſtrances againſt the inſolence of the

huntſman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntſman was too neceſſary to his happineſs to be diſcarded; and he had ſtill continued to ravage his own eſtate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by ſhooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a conſumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. *Buſy* was too much an economiſt to feel either joy or ſorrow at his death. She received the compliments and conſolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which ſhe ſtole privately every night and morning to ſee the cows milked; and after a few days declared that ſhe thought a widow might employ herſelf better than in nurſing grief; and that, for her part, ſhe was reſolved that the fortunes of her children ſhould not be impaired by her neglect.

She therefore immediately applied herſelf to the reformation of abuſes. She gave away the dogs, diſcharged the ſervants of the kennel and ſtable, and ſent the horſes to the next fair, but rated at ſo high a price that they returned unſold. She was reſolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They loſt their ſleekneſs and grace, and were ſoon purchaſed at half the value.

She ſoon diſencumbered herſelf from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarſe apron, and ſhort petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which ſhe takes the management wholly upon herſelf. She riſes before the ſun to order the horſes to their geers, and ſees them well rubbed down at their return from work; ſhe attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nurſed; ſhe walks

out among the ſheep at noon, counts the lambs, and obſerves the fences, and, where ſhe finds a gap, ſtops it with a buſh till it can be better mended. In harveſt ſhe rides afield in the waggon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leiſure hours ſhe looks gooſe eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheeſe.

When reſpect or curioſity brings viſitants to her houſe, ſhe entertains them with prognoſticks of a ſcarcity of wheat, or a rot among the ſheep, and always thinks herſelf privileged to diſmiſs them, when ſhe is to ſee the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the rooſt.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom ſhe has taught nothing but the loweſt houſehold duties. In my laſt viſit I met miſs *Buſy* carrying grains to a ſick cow, and was entertained with the accompliſhments of her eldeſt ſon, a youth of ſuch early maturity, that though he is only ſixteen, ſhe can truſt him to ſell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though ſomewhat tanned in making hay, was buſy in pouring out ale to the plowmen, that every one might have an equal ſhare.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the abſurd prudence of their mother to ignorance and meanneſs; but when I recommended a more elegant education, was anſwered, that ſhe never ſaw bookiſh or finical people grow rich, and that ſhe was good for nothing herſelf till ſhe had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-ſchool.

I am Yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

NUMB. 139. TUESDAY, *July* 16, 1751.

——Sit quod vis ſimplex duntaxas et unum. HOR.

Let ev'ry piece be ſimple and be one.

IT is required by *Ariſtotle* to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally neceſſary to every other ſpecies of regular compoſition, that it ſhould have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The be-"ginning," ſays he, "is that which has nothing "neceſſarily previous, but to which that which "follows is naturally conſequent; the end, on "the contrary, is that which by neceſſity, or at "leaſt according to the common courſe of things, "ſucceeds ſomething elſe, but which implies no-"thing conſequent to itſelf; the middle is con-"nected on one ſide to ſomething that naturally "goes before, and on the other to ſomething that "naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critick, for the diſpoſition of the different parts of a well conſtituted fable. It muſt begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repoſe, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate paſſages muſt join the laſt effect to the firſt cauſe, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing muſt be therefore inſerted which does not apparently ariſe from ſomething foregoing, and properly make way for ſomething that ſucceeds it.

This precept is to be underſtood in its rigour only with reſpect to great and eſſential events, and cannot be extended in the ſame force to minuter circumſtances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy as they contribute more to the

main deſign; for it is always a proof of extenſive thought and accurate circumſpection, to promote various purpoſes by the ſame act; and the idea of an ornament admits uſe, though it ſeems to exclude neceſſity.

Whoever purpoſes, as it is expreſſed by *Milton*, *to build the lofty rhyme*, muſt acquaint himſelf with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be ſolid as well as beautiful; that nothing ſtand ſingle or independent, ſo as that it may be taken away without injuring the reſt; but that from the foundation to the pinnacles one part reſt firm upon another.

This regular and conſequential diſtribution, is among common authors frequently neglected; but the failures of thoſe, whoſe example can have no influence, may be ſafely overlooked, nor is it of much uſe to recall obſcure and unregarded names to memory for the ſake of ſporting with their infamy. But if there is any writer whoſe genius can embelliſh impropriety, and whoſe authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquiſition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies, is a taſk equally uſeleſs with that of the chemiſt, who employs the arts of ſeparation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The tragedy of *Samſon Agoniſtes* has been celebrated as the ſecond work of the great author of *Paradiſe Loſt*, and oppoſed with all the confidence of triumph to the dramatick performances of other nations. It contains indeed juſt ſentiments, maxims of wiſdom, and oracles of piety, and many paſ-

ſages

ſages written with the ancient ſpirit of choral poetry, in which there is a juſt and pleaſing mixture of *Seneca*'s moral declamation with the wild enthuſiaſm of the *Greek* writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is compoſed according to the indiſpenſable laws of *Ariſtotelian* criticiſm: and, omitting at preſent all other conſiderations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptneſs, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts neceſſary to be known.

Samſon. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To theſe dark ſteps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of ſun and ſhade;
There I am wont to ſit when any chance
Relieves me from my taſk of ſervile toil,
Daily in the common priſon elſe enjoin'd me.—
—O wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel?——
—Why was my breeding order'd and preſcrib'd,
As of a perſon ſeparate to God,
Deſign'd for great exploits; if I muſt die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myſelf?
Who this high gift of ſtrength, committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how eaſily bereft me,
Under the ſeat of ſilence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman muſt reveal it.

His ſoliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his

miſeries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a ſolemn vindication of divine juſtice. So that at the concluſion of the firſt act there is no deſign laid, no diſcovery made, nor any diſpoſition formed towards the ſubſequent event.

In the ſecond act, *Manoah*, the father of *Samſon*, comes to ſeek his ſon, and, being ſhewn him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his miſery, and compariſons of his preſent with his former ſtate, repreſenting to him the ignominy which his religion ſuffers, by the feſtival this day celebrated in honour of *Dagon*, to whom the idolaters aſcribed his overthrow.

——Thou bear'ſt
Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly haſt thou paid and ſtill art paying
That rigid ſcore. A worſe thing yet remains,
This day the *Philiſtines* a pop'lar feaſt
Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim
Great pomp and ſacrifice, and praiſes loud
To *Dagon*, as their God, who hath deliver'd
Thee, *Samſon*, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who ſlew'ſt them many a ſlain.

Samſon, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father conſiders as the effuſion of prophetick confidence.

Samſon. ——God be ſure,
Will not connive or linger thus provok'd,
But will ariſe and his great name aſſert:
Dagon muſt ſtoop, and ſhall ere long receive
Such a diſcomfit, as ſhall quite deſpoil him
Of all theſe boaſted trophies won on me.

Manoah.

Manoah. With cauſe this hope relieves thee,
and theſe words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exaſperate *Samſon*, cannot, I think, be cenſured as wholly ſuperfluous; but the ſucceeding diſpute, in which *Samſon* contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to ſolicit his releaſe, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of *Da'ilah*, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and inſtructive, from which ſhe retires, after ſhe has exhauſted her perſuaſions, and is no more ſeen nor heard of; nor has her viſit any effect but that of raiſing the character of *Samſon*.

In the fourth act enters *Harapha*, the giant of *Gath*, whoſe name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming than to ſee the man whoſe ſtrength and actions are ſo loudly celebrated.

Haraph. ——Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd,
Incredible to me; in this diſpleas'd,
That I was never preſent in the place
Of thoſe encounters, where we might have tried
Each others force in camp or liſted fields:
And now am come to ſee of whom ſuch noiſe

Hath walk'd about, and each limb to ſurvey,
If thy appearance anſwer loud report.

Samſon challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one ſide, and imbittered by contemptuous inſults on the other, *Harapha* retires; we then hear it determined, by *Samſon* and the chorus, that no conſequence good or bad will proceed from their interview.

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counſel ſtir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.

Samſ. He muſt allege ſome cauſe, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, leſt a queſtion riſe,
Whether he durſt accept the offer or not;
And that he durſt not, plain enough appear'd.

At laſt, in the fifth act, appears a meſſenger from the lords aſſembled at the feſtival of *Dagon*, with a ſummons by which *Samſon* is required to come and entertain them with ſome proof of his ſtrength. *Samſon*, after a ſhort expoſtulation, diſmiſſes him with a firm and reſolute refuſal; but during the abſence of the meſſenger, having a while defended the propriety of his conduct, he at laſt declares himſelf moved by a ſecret impulſe to comply, and utters ſome dark preſages of a great event to be brought to paſs by his agency, under the direction of providence.

Samſ. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rouſing motions in me, which diſpoſe
To ſomething extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this meſſenger will go along,

Nothing

Nothing to do, be ſure, that may diſhonour
Our law, or ſtain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of preſage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By ſome great act, or of my days the laſt.

While *Samſon* is conducted off by the meſſenger, his father returns with hopes of ſucceſs in his ſolicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, firſt by a ſhout of triumph, and afterwards by ſcreams of horror and agony. As they ſtand deliberating where they ſhall be ſecure, a man who had been preſent at the ſhow enters, and relates how *Samſon* having prevailed on his guide to ſuffer him to lean againſt the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the ſpectators and himſelf.

———Thoſe two maſſy pillars,
With horrible confuſion, to and fro,
He tugg'd, he ſhook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burſt of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who ſat beneath——
———*Samſon* with theſe immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the ſame deſtruction on himſelf.

This is undoubtedly a juſt and regular cataſtrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which *Ariſtotle* himſelf could not have diſapproved; but it muſt be allowed to want a middle, ſince nothing paſſes between the firſt act and the laſt, that either haſtens or delays the death of *Samſon*. The whole drama, if its ſuperfluities were cut off, would ſcarcely fill a ſingle act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

NUMB. 140. SATURDAY, *July* 20, 1751.

———*Quis tam* Lucili *fautor inepte eſt,*
Ut non hoc fateatur. Hor.

What doating bigot, to his faults ſo blind,
As not to grant me this, can *Milton* find?

IT is common, ſays *Bacon*, to deſire the end without enduring the means. Every member of ſociety feels and acknowledges the neceſſity of detecting crimes, yet ſcarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to ſecure an informer from publick hatred. The learned world has always admitted the uſefulneſs of critical diſquiſitions, yet he that attempts to ſhow, however modeſtly, the failures of a celebrated writer, ſhall ſurely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiouſneſs, and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I ſhall proceed to examine the ſentiments of *Milton*'s tragedy, which, though much leſs liable to cenſure than the diſpoſition of his plan, are, like thoſe of other writers, ſometimes expoſed to juſt exception for want of care, or want of diſcernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they conſiſt more or leſs with the character and circumſtances of the perſon to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the compoſition in which they are found, or with the ſettled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragick poets to introduce their perſons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not poſſibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly diſcovered

vered regions often diſplay their ſkill in *European* learning. The god of love is mentioned in *Tamerlane* with all the familiarity of a *Roman* epigrammatiſt; and a late writer has put *Harvey*'s doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a *Turkiſh* ſtateſman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philoſophers or anatomiſts.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the antient eaſtern nations, and his invention, which required no aſſiſtance from the common cant of poetry, have preſerved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned *Chalybean Steel*, of which it is not very likely that his chorus ſhould have heard, and has made *Alp* the general name of a mountain, in a region where the *Alps* could ſcarcely be known.

No medicinal liquor can aſſwage,
Nor breath of cooling air from ſnowy *Alp*.

He has taught *Samſon* the tales of *Circe* and the *Syrens*, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with *Dalilah*.

I know thy trains,
Tho' dearly to my coſt, thy gins and toils;
Thy fair *enchanted cup*, and *warbling charms*
No more on me have pow'r.

But the groſſeſt error of this kind is the ſolemn introduction of the Phœnix in the laſt ſcene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the perſonage to whom it is aſcribed, but as it is ſo evidently contrary to reaſon and nature, that it ought

ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any ſerious poem.

——Virtue giv'n for loſt,
Depreſt, and overthrown, as ſeem'd,
Like that ſelf-begotten bird
In the *Arabian* woods emboſt
That no ſecond knows, nor third,
And lay ere while a holocauſt;
From out our aſhy womb now teem'd
Revives, reflouriſhes, then vigorous moſt
When moſt unactive deem'd,
And tho' her body die, her fame ſurvives,
A ſecular bird ages of lives.

Another ſpecies of impropriety, is the unſuitableneſs of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The ſeriouſneſs and ſolemnity of tragedy neceſſarily rejects all pointed or epigrammatical expreſſions, all remote conceits and oppoſition of ideas. *Samſon*'s complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural.

As in the land of darkneſs, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd; but O yet more miſerable!
Myſelf my ſepulchre, a moving grave!
Bury'd, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worſt of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All alluſions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is uſually aſſociated, are doubtleſs unſuitable to a ſpecies of compoſition which ought to be always awful, though not always magnificent.

The

The remark therefore of the chorus on good and bad news, ſeems to want elevation.

Manoah. A little ſtay will bring ſome notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad ſo great, of bad the ſooner;
For evil news *rides poſt*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanneſs, that has leaſt to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which depending only upon ſounds, loſe their exiſtence by the change of a ſyllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue.

Chor. But had we beſt retire? I ſee a *ſtorm*.
Samſ. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempeſt brings.
Samſ. Be leſs abſtruſe, my ridling days are paſt.
Chor. Look now for no inchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his ſtride,
The Giant *Harapha*.——

And yet more deſpicable are the lines in which *Manoah*'s paternal kindneſs is commended by the chorus.

Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their ſons,
Thou for thy ſon art bent to *lay out* all;——

Samſon's complaint of the inconveniencies of impriſonment is not wholly without verbal quaintneſs.

——I a priſoner chain'd, ſcarce freely draw
The air impriſon'd alſo, cloſe and damp.

From

From the ſentiments we may properly deſcend to the conſideration of the language, which, in imitation of the antients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably ſimple and unadorned, ſeldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet ſometimes metaphors find admiſſion, even where their conſiſtency is not accurately preſerved. Thus *Samſon* confounds loquacity with a ſhipwreck.

How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a fooliſh *pilot*, have *ſhipwreck'd*
My *veſſel* truſted to me from above,
Gloriouſly *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have *divulg'd* the *ſecret gift* of God.
To a deceitful woman?——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report.

He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
Thy *words*, by *adding fuel to the flame?*

The verſification is in the dialogue much more ſmooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often ſo harſh and diſſonant, as ſcarce to preſerve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity.

Or do my eyes miſrepreſent? Can this be he,
That heroick, that renown'd,
Irreſiſtible *Samſon*; whom unarm'd
No ſtrength of man, or fierceſt wild beaſt, could withſtand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid.——

Since

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of *Milton*, critical integrity requires that I ſhould endeavour to diſplay his excellencies, though they will not eaſily be diſcovered in ſhort quotations, becauſe they conſiſt in the juſtneſs of diffuſe reaſonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of theſe deſcriptions, ſimilies, or ſplendid ſentences, with which other tragedies are ſo laviſhly adorned.

Yet ſome paſſages may be ſelected which ſeem to deſerve particular notice, either as containing ſentiments of paſſion, repreſentations of life, precepts of conduct, or ſallies of imagination. It is not eaſy to give a ſtronger repreſentation of the wearineſs of deſpondency than in the words of *Samſon* to his father.

——I feel my genial ſpirits droop,
My hopes all flat; nature within me ſeems
In all her functions weary of herſelf;
My race of glory run, and race of ſhame,
And I ſhall ſhortly be with them that reſt.

The reply of *Samſon* to the flattering *Dalilah* affords a juſt and ſtriking deſcription of the ſtratagems and allurements of feminine hypocriſy.

———Theſe are thy wonted arts,
And arts of ev'ry woman falſe like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to ſubmit, beſeech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorſe,
Confeſs and promiſe wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her huſband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakneſs which way to aſſail:

Then

Then with more cautious and inſtructed ſkill
Again tranſgreſſes, and again ſubmits.

When *Samſon* has refuſed to make himſelf a ſpectacle at the feaſt of *Dagon*, he firſt juſtifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having ſerved the *Philiſtines*, by a very juſt diſtinction; and then deſtroys the common excuſe of cowardice and ſervility, which always confound temptation with compulſion.

Chor. Yet with thy ſtrength thou ſerv'ſt the *Philiſtines*.
Samſ. Not in their idol worſhip, but by labour
Honeſt and lawful to deſerve my food
Of thoſe who have me in their civil power.
Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
Samſ. Where outward force conſtrains, the ſentence holds,
But who conſtrains me to the temple of *Dagon*,
Not dragging? The *Philiſtine* lords command.
Commands are no conſtraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to diſpleaſe
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind.

The complaint of blindneſs which *Samſon* pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addreſſed to the paſſions and the fancy. The enumeration of his miſeries is ſucceeded by a very pleaſing train of poetical images, and concluded by ſuch expoſtulations and wiſhes, as reaſon too often ſubmits to learn from deſpair.

O firſt created beam, and thou great word
Let there be light, and light was over all;

Why

Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The ſun to me is dark
And ſilent as the moon,
When ſhe deſerts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light ſo neceſſary is to life,
And almoſt life itſelf; if it be true,
That light is in the ſoul,
She all in ev'ry part; why was the ſight
To ſuch a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and ſo eaſy to be quenched,
And not, as feeling, thro' all parts diffus'd,
That ſhe may look at will thro' ev'ry pore.

Such are the faults and ſuch the beauties of *Samſon Agoniſtes*, which I have ſhown with no other purpoſe than to promote the knowledge of true criticiſm. The everlaſting verdure of *Milton*'s laurels has nothing to fear from the blaſts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to ſtrengthen their ſhoots by lopping their luxuriance.

NUMB. 141. TUESDAY, *July* 23, 1751.

Hilariſque, tamen cum pondere, virtus. STAT.

Greatneſs with eaſe, and gay ſeverity.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

POliticians have long obſerved, that the greateſt events may be often traced back to ſlender cauſes. Petty competition or caſual friendſhip, the prudence of a ſlave, or the garrulity of a woman,

woman, have hindered or promoted the moſt important ſchemes, and haſtened or retarded the revolutions of empire.

Whoever ſhall review his life will generally find, that the whole tenor of his conduct has been determined by ſome accident of no apparent moment, or by a combination of inconſiderable circumſtances, acting when his imagination was unoccupied, and his judgment unſettled; and that his principles and actions have taken their colour from ſome ſecret infuſion, mingled without deſign in the current of his ideas. The deſires that predominate in our hearts, are inſtilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look upon the various ſcenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nurſery or the ſchool, invariably deſtined to the purſuit of great acquiſitions, or petty accompliſhments.

Such was the impulſe by which I have been kept in motion from my earlieſt years. I was born to an inheritance which gave my childhood a claim to diſtinction and careſſes, and was accuſtomed to hear applauſes, before they had much influence on my thoughts. The firſt praiſe of which I remember myſelf ſenſible was that of good-humour, which, whether I deſerved it or not when it was beſtowed, I have ſince made it my whole buſineſs to propagate and maintain.

When I was ſent to ſchool, the gaiety of my look and the livelineſs of my loquacity ſoon gained me admiſſion to hearts not yet fortified againſt affection by artifice or intereſt. I was entruſted with every ſtratagem, and aſſociated in every ſport;

ſport; my company gave alacrity to a frolick, and gladneſs to a holiday. I was indeed ſo much employed in adjuſting or executing ſchemes of diverſion, that I had no leiſure for my taſks, but was furniſhed with exerciſes, and inſtructed in my leſſons, by ſome kind patron of the higher claſſes. My maſter, not ſuſpecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindneſs would not puniſh nor his impartiality excuſe, allowed me to eſcape with a ſlight examination, laughed at the pertneſs of my ignorance, and the ſprightlineſs of my abſurdities, and could not forbear to ſhow that he regarded me with ſuch tenderneſs, as genius and learning can ſeldom excite.

From ſchool I was diſmiſſed to the univerſity, where I ſoon drew upon me the notice of the younger ſtudents, and was the conſtant partner of their morning walks, and evening compotations. I was not indeed much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts, who wanted nothing but the dulneſs of a ſcholar, and might become eminent, whenever he ſhould condeſcend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with negligence, and repreſſed my ſallies with ſupercilious gravity; yet having natural good humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out againſt the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muſcles of diſciplinarian moroſeneſs, received me with ſmiles after an elopement, and, that he might not betray his truſt to his fondneſs, was content to ſpare my diligence by increaſing his own.

Thus I continued to diſſipate the gloom of collegiate auſterity, to waſte my own life in idleneſs,

and lure others from their ſtudies, till the happy hour arrived, when I was ſent to *London*. I ſoon diſcovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gaiety, and was quickly diſtinguiſhed as a wit by the ladies, a ſpecies of beings only heard of at the univerſity, whom I had no ſooner the happineſs of approaching than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleaſing them.

A wit, Mr. *Rambler*, in the dialect of ladies, is not always a man, who, by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehenſive knowledge, brings diſtant ideas unexpectedly together, who by ſome peculiar acuteneſs diſcovers reſemblance in objects diſſimilar to common eyes, or by mixing heterogeneous notions dazzles the attention with ſudden ſcintillations of conceit. A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however eaſy it may ſeem, many gifts of nature, and attainments of art, muſt commonly concur. He that hopes to be conceived as a wit in female aſſemblies, ſhould have a form neither ſo aimable as to ſtrike with admiration, nor ſo coarſe as to raiſe diſguſt, with an underſtanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be deſpiſed. The other parts of the character are more ſubject to variation; it was formerly eſſential to a wit, that half his back ſhould be covered with a ſnowy fleece, and at a time yet more remote no man was a wit without his boots. In the days of the Spectator a ſnuff-box ſeems to have been indiſpenſible; but in my time an embroidered coat was ſufficient without any preciſe regulation of the reſt of his dreſs.

But wigs and boots and ſnuff-boxes are vain without a perpetual reſolution to be merry, and who

who can always find ſupplies of mirth! *Juvenal* indeed, in his compariſon of the two oppoſite philoſophers, wonders only whence an unexhauſted fountain of tears could be diſcharged: but had *Juvenal*, with all his ſpirit, undertaken my province, he would have found conſtant gaiety equally difficult to be ſupported. Conſider, Mr. *Rambler*, and compaſſionate the condition of a man, who has taught every company to expect from him, a continual feaſt of laughter, an unintermitted ſtream of jocularity. The taſk of every other ſlave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the lexicographer at laſt finds the concluſion of his alphabet; only the hapleſs wit has his labour always to begin, the call for novelty is never ſatisfied, and one jeſt only raiſes expectation of another.

I know that among men of learning and aſperity the retainers to the female world are not much regarded; yet I cannot but hope that if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchaſed, you would look with ſome gratulation on our ſucceſs, and with ſome pity on our miſcarriages. Think on the miſery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenneſs and ranſack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is ſpent, to raiſe merriment without images, to harraſs his imagination in queſt of thoughts which he cannot ſtart, and his memory in purſuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; obſerve the effort with which he ſtrains to conceal deſpondency by a ſmile, and the diſtreſs in which he ſits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as their laſt refuge from ſilence and dejection.

It

It were endleſs to recount the ſhifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different ſpecies of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houſes, and have often lived a week upon an expreſſion, of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratick induſtry, I gleaned jeſts at home from obſolete farces. To collect wit was indeed ſafe, for I conſorted with none that looked much into books, but to diſperſe it was the difficulty. A ſeeming negligence was often uſeful, and I have very ſucceſsfully made a reply not to what the lady had ſaid, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were ſo perverſe as to rectify a miſtake which had given occaſion to a burſt of merriment. Sometimes I drew the converſation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treaſured up, like ſportſmen who boaſt of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is however in ſome happy moments gained at leſs expence; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a ſeries of quibbles, and made myſelf good company at another, by ſcalding my fingers, or miſtaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

Theſe are artful deceits and uſeful expedients; but expedients are at length exhauſted, and deceits detected. Time itſelf, among other injuries, diminiſhes the power of pleaſing, and I now find in my forty-fifth year many pranks and pleaſantries very coldly received which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy neceſſity of ſupporting that character by ſtudy, which I gained

gained by levity, having learned too late that gaiety muſt be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never pleaſe long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but eſteemed for its uſefulneſs.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

NUMB. 142. SATURDAY, *July* 27, 1751.

Ενθα δ' ἀνὴρ ἰνίαυε πιλώριος——οὐδὲ, μέτ' ἄλλοις
Πωλεῖτ'· ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἰὼν ἀθεμίστια ἤδη
Καὶ γὰρ δαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον, οὐδὲ ἰῴκει
Ἀνδρὶ ζιτοφάγῳ. HOMER.

A giant ſhepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the reſt, and ſolitary reigns,
In ſhelter thick of horrid ſhade reclin'd;
And gloomy miſchiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in ſtature or in face. POPE.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING been accuſtomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of *Eugenio*, who has an eſtate and ſeat in a diſtant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to pleaſe ourſelves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal ſpring, criticiſed every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and com-

pared every ſcene of action with the narratives of hiſtorians. By this ſucceſſion of amuſements we enjoyed the exerciſe of a journey without ſuffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that, by a progreſs ſo leiſurely and gentle, we miſſed the adventures of a poſt-chaiſe, and the pleaſure of alarming villages with the tumult of our paſſage, and of diſguiſing our inſignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

The firſt week after our arrival at *Eugenio*'s houſe was paſſed in receiving viſits from his neighbours, who crouded about him with all the eagerneſs of benevolence; ſome impatient to learn the news of the court and town, that they might be qualified by authentick information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others deſirous of his intereſt to accommodate diſputes, or of his advice in the ſettlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

The civilities which he had received were ſoon to be returned; and I paſſed ſome time with great ſatisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the ſeats, gardens, and plantations, which are ſcattered over it. My pleaſure would indeed have been greater had I been ſometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderneſs alone, but to appear as the friend of *Eugenio* was an honour not to be enjoyed without ſome inconveniencies; ſo much was every one ſolicitous for my regard, that I could ſeldom eſcape to ſolitude, or ſteal a moment from the emulation of complaiſance, and the vigilance of officiouſneſs.

In theſe rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently paſſed by a houſe of unuſual magnificence. While I had my curioſity yet diſtracted

among many novelties, it did not much attract my obſervation; but in a ſhort time I could not forbear ſurveying with particular notice; for the length of the wall which incloſed the gardens, the diſpoſition of the ſhades that waved over it, and the canals, of which I could obtain ſome glimpſes through the trees from our own windows, gave me reaſon to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet ſeen in that province. I therefore enquired, as we rode by it, why we never, amongſt our excurſions, ſpent an hour where there was ſuch an appearance of ſplendor and affluence. *Eugenio* told me that the ſeat which I ſo much admired, was commonly called in the country the *haunted houſe*, and that no viſits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet ſeen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected, and deſolate, I eaſily conceived that there was ſomething to be explained, and told him that I ſuppoſed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by day-light without danger. The danger, ſays he, is indeed only that of appearing to ſolicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not poſſible to converſe without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his inſolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.

Our converſation was then accidentally interrupted; but my inquiſitive humour being now in motion, could not reſt without a full account of this newly diſcovered prodigy. I was ſoon informed that the fine houſe and ſpacious gardens were haunted by ſquire *Bluſter*, of whom it was very eaſy to learn the character, ſince nobody

had regard for him ſufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could diſcover.

Squire *Bluſter* is deſcended of an ancient family. The eſtate which his anceſtors had immemorially poſſeſſed was much augmented by captain *Bluſter*, who ſerved under *Drake* in the reign of *Elizabeth*; and the *Bluſters*, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently repreſented the ſhire in parliament, been choſen to preſent addreſſes, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hoſpitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave ſoon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not ſuffer him to be controlled, becauſe ſhe could not bear to hear him cry; and never ſent him to ſchool, becauſe ſhe was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inſpect the ſteward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the ſervants at a junket; ſo that he was at the age of eighteen a complete maſter of all the lower arts of domeſtick policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the oſtler, and procured the diſcharge of nineteen maids for illicit correſpondence with cottagers and charwomen.

By the opportunities of parſimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large ſum of money was accumulated, and he found himſelf, when he took his affairs into his own hands, the richeſt man in the county. It has been long the cuſtom of this family to celebrate the

the heir's completion of his twenty-firſt year, by an entertainment, at which the houſe is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general feſtivity. On this occaſion young *Bluſter* exhibited the firſt tokens of his future eminence, by ſhaking his purſe at an old gentleman, who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater ſum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has, at one time or other, inſulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and ſpiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentleſs proſecution of every man that preſumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no eſtate adjoining equal to his own, his oppreſſions are often borne without reſiſtance, for fear of a long ſuit, of which he delights to count the expences without the leaſt ſolicitude about the event; for he knows, that where nothing but an honorary right is conteſted, the poorer antagoniſt muſt always ſuffer, whatever ſhall be the laſt deciſion of the law.

By the ſucceſs of ſome of theſe diſputes, he has ſo elated his inſolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him, ſo irritated his virulence, that his whole life is ſpent in meditating or executing miſchief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand ſatisfaction for damages which his grounds have ſuffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yeſterday ſoliciting *Eugenio* to enable

her to replevin her only cow then in the pound by ſquire *Bluſter*'s order, who had ſent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and perſuade her to ſell the cow at an under rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage, for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children; and has now an old woman in the county-jail for a treſpaſs which ſhe committed, by coming into his ground to pick up acorns for her hog.

Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Diſtreſs will fly to immediate refuge, without much conſideration of remote conſequences. *Bluſter* has therefore a deſpotick authority in many families, whom he has aſſiſted, on preſſing occaſions, with larger ſums than they can eaſily repay. The only viſits that he makes are to theſe houſes of misfortune, where he enters with the inſolence of abſolute command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy inſults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obſcenity.

He is of late ſomewhat leſs offenſive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expoſtulations, by which he was only irritated to groſſer outrage, ſeized him by the ſleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and cloſed the door upon him in a ſtormy night. He took his uſual revenge next morning by a writ, but the debt was diſcharged by the aſſiſtance of *Eugenio*.

It is his rule to ſuffer his tenants to owe him rent, becauſe by this indulgence he ſecures to himſelf the power of ſeizure whenever he has an inclination

inclination to amuſe himſelf with calamity, and feaſt his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet as he is ſometimes capriciouſly liberal to thoſe whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppreſſion, the poſſibility of better fortune quickly lures another to ſupply his place.

Such is the life of ſquire *Bluſter*; a man in whoſe power fortune has liberally placed the means of happineſs, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witneſſes; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours ſcorn him as a brute; his dependents dread him as an oppreſſor; and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated, he is likewiſe feared.

I am, Sir, &c.

VAGULUS.

NUMB. 143. TUESDAY, *July* 30, 1751.

——Moveat cornicula riſum
Furtivis nudata coloribus.—— HOR.

Left when the birds their various colours claim
Stripp'd of his ſtolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should ſtand the laughter of the publick ſcorn. FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which intereſt or envy have taught thoſe who live upon literary fame to diſturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the moſt common is the charge of plagiariſm. When the excellence of a new compoſition can no longer be conteſted, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applauſe, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obſcure, may be ſet at ſuch a diſtance as not to overpower our fainter luſtre.

This accuſation is dangerous, becauſe, even when it is falſe, it may be ſometimes urged with probability. *Bruyere* declares that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are preoccupied, and that deſcription and ſentiment have been long exhauſted. It is indeed certain that whoever attempts any common topick, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with thoſe of other writers; nor can the niceſt judgment always diſtinguiſh accidental ſimilitude from artful imitation. There is likewiſe a common ſtock of images, a ſettled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of tranſition, which all authors ſuppoſe themſelves at liberty to uſe, and which produce the reſemblance generally obſervable

obſervable among cotemporaries. So that in books which beſt deſerve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the diſpoſition of materials already provided; the ſame ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the poſſeſſion of other hands; and by reſtoring to every man his own, as the *Romans* muſt have returned to their cots from the poſſeſſion of the world, ſo the moſt inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predeceſſors only by furniſhing himſelf with thoughts and elegancies out of the ſame general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be cenſured as a mean copier of *Angelo* or *Wren*, becauſe he digs his marble from the ſame quarry, ſquares his ſtones by the ſame art, and unites them in columns of the ſame orders.

Many ſubjects fall under the conſideration of an author, which being limited by nature can admit only of ſlight and accidental diverſities. All definitions of the ſame thing muſt be nearly the ſame; and deſcriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, muſt always have in ſome degree that reſemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets deſcribing the ſpring or the ſea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulneſs of hope, the fugacity of pleaſure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and for palliatives of theſe incurable miſeries, they would concur in recommending kindneſs, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When therefore there are found in *Virgil* and *Horace* two ſimilar paſſages,

Hæc tibi erunt artes———
Parcere ſubjectis, et debellare ſuperbos.—— VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd ſlave to free:
Theſe are imperial arts, and worthy thee. DRYDEN.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hoſtem. HOR.

Let *Cæſar* ſpread his conqueſts far,
Leſs pleas'd to triumph than to ſpare.

it is ſurely not neceſſary to ſuppoſe with a late critick that one is copied from the other, ſince neither *Virgil* nor *Horace* can be ſuppoſed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in ſucceſs.

Cicero and *Ovid* have on very different occaſions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his ſoldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why ſhould *Ovid* be ſuſpected to have owed to *Tully* an obſervation which perhaps occurs to every man that ſees or hears of military glories.

Tully obſerves of *Achilles*, that had not *Homer* written, his valour had been without praiſe.

Niſi Ilias illa extitiſſet, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruiſſet.

Unleſs the *Iliad* had been publiſhed, his name had been loſt in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us with more energy that there were brave men before the wars of *Troy*, but they were loſt in oblivion for want of a poet.

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; ſed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate ſacro.

Before

Before great *Agamemnon* reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whoſe huge ambition's now contain'd
In the ſmall compaſs of a grave:
In endleſs night they ſleep, unwept, unknown:
No bard had they to make all time their own. FRANCIS.

Tully enquires, in the ſame oration, why, but for fame, we diſturb a ſhort life with ſo many fatigues?

Quid eſt quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in ſo ſmall a circuit of life ſhould we employ ourſelves in ſo many fatigues?

Horace enquires in the ſame manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim with eager ſtrife
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

when our life is of ſo ſhort duration, why we form ſuch numerous deſigns? But *Horace*, as well as *Tully*, might diſcover that records are needful to preſerve the memory of actions, and that no records were ſo durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is ſhort, and that we conſume it in unneceſſary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction ſo widely ſcattered and ſo eaſily cropped, that it is ſcarcely juſt to tax the uſe of them as an act by which any particular writer is deſpoiled of his garland; for they may be ſaid to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their ſucceſſors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fragrance. The

paſſage of *Orpheus* to hell, with the recovery and ſecond loſs of *Eurydice*, have been deſcribed after *Boetius* by *Pope*, in ſuch a manner as might juſtly leave him ſuſpected of imitation, were not the images ſuch as they might both have derived from more ancient writers.

Quæ fontes agitant metu
Ultrices ſcelerum deæ
Jam mœſtæ lacrymis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The pow'rs of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compaſſion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the ſound. F. Lewis.

Thy ſtone, O *Syſiphus*, ſtands ſtill,
Ixion reſts upon his wheel,
And the pale ſpectres dance!
The furies ſink upon their iron beds.

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miſerans, ait——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdu'd at length, *Hell*'s pitying monarch cry'd,
The ſong rewarding, let us yield the bride. F. Lewis.

He ſung, and hell conſented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern *Proſerpine* relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen *ſuam*
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When *Orpheus*, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life reſtor'd,
At once beheld, and loſt, and was undone. F. Lewis.

But

But ſoon, too ſoon, the lover turns his eyes:
Again ſhe falls, again ſhe dies, ſhe dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more reſemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the ſame ideas are conjoined without any natural ſeries or neceſſary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can ſcarcely be doubted, that in the firſt of the following paſſages *Pope* remembered *Ovid*, and that in the ſecond he copied *Craſhaw*.

Sæpe pater dixit, ſtudium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullas ipſe reliquit opes———
Sponte ſuâ carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod conabar ſcribere, verſus erat. OVID.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cry'd;
Ev'n *Homer* left no riches when he dy'd———
In verſe ſpontaneous flow'd my native ſtrain,
Forc'd by no ſweat or labour of the brain. F. LEWIS.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father diſobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I liſp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.
POPE.

———This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can ſay more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honeſt man. CRASHAW.

This modeſt ſtone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly ſay, Here lies an honeſt man. POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impreſſed by ſenſible objects, or neceſſarily ariſing from the coalition or compariſon of common ſentiments, may

may be with great juſtice ſuſpected whenever they are found a ſecond time. Thus *Waller* probably owed to *Grotius* an elegant compliment.

Here lies the learned *Savil*'s heir,
So early wiſe, and laſting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old.

WALLER.

Unica lux ſæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit eſſe ſenem. GROT.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you wou'd pronounce him, nor a boy.

F. LEWIS.

And *Prior* was indebted for a pretty illuſtration to *Alleyne*'s poetical hiſtory of *Henry* the ſeventh.

For nought but light itſelf, itſelf can ſhow,
And only kings can write, what kings can do.

ALLEYNE.

Your muſick's power, your muſick muſt diſcloſe,
For what light is, 'tis only light that ſhews.

PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the ſame writer be cenſured, for endeavouring the clandeſtine appropriation of a thought which he borrowed, ſurely without thinking himſelf diſgraced, from an epigram of *Plato*.

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἔπει τοίη μὲν ὁρᾶσθαι
Οὐκ ἐθέλω, οἵη δ' ἦν πάρος, οὐ δύναμαι.

Venus, take my votive glaſs,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day I ſhall be,
Venus let me never ſee.

As

As not every inſtance of ſimilitude can be conſidered as a proof of imitation, ſo not every imitation ought to be ſtigmatized as plagiariſm. The adoption of a noble ſentiment, or the inſertion of a borrowed ornament, may ſometimes diſplay ſo much judgment as will almoſt compenſate for invention; and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of ſervility, purſue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footſteps.

NUMB. 144. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 3, 1751.

Daphnidis arcum
Fregiſti et calamos: quæ tu, perverſe Menalca,
Et cum vidiſti puero donata, dolebas;
Et ſi non aliqua nocuiſſes, mortuus eſſes. VIRG.

The bow of *Daphnis* and the ſhafts you broke;
When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
And but for miſchief, you had dy'd for ſpight. DRYDEN.

IT is impoſſible to mingle in converſation without obſerving the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The firſt appearance of excellence unites multitudes againſt it; unexpected oppoſition riſes up on every ſide; the celebrated and the obſcure join in the confederacy; ſubtilty furniſhes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The ſtrength and unanimity of this alliance is not eaſily conceived. It might be expected that no man ſhould ſuffer his heart to be inflamed with malice, but by injuries; that none ſhould buſy himſelf in conteſting the pretenſions of another, but when ſome right of his own was involved in the

the queſtion; that at leaſt hoſtilities commenced without cauſe, ſhould quickly ceaſe; that the armies of malignity ſhould ſoon diſperſe, when no common intereſt could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a riſing character ſhould be left to thoſe who had ſomething to hope or fear from the event.

The hazards of thoſe that aſpire to eminence would be much diminiſhed if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, and what is of yet greater importance, would be known. But what caution is ſufficient to ward off the blows of inviſible aſſailants, or what force can ſtand againſt unintermitted attacks, and a continual ſucceſſion of enemies? Yet ſuch is the ſtate of the world, that no ſooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the publick upon him, than he ſtands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives in the tumult of hoſtility, from diſtant and from nameleſs hands, wounds not always eaſy to be cured.

It is probable that the onſet againſt the candidates for renown, is originally incited by thoſe who imagine themſelves in danger of ſuffering by their ſucceſs; but when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the ſtandard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying ſquadrons are diſperſed to every part, ſo pleaſed with an opportunity of miſchief that they toil without proſpect of praiſe, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deſerve diſtinction, he will be ſurpriſed to hear himſelf cenſured where he could not expect to have been named;

named; he will find the utmoſt acrimony of malice among thoſe whom he never could have offended.

As there are to be found in the ſervice of envy men of every diverſity of temper and degree of underſtanding, calumny is diffuſed by all arts and methods of propagation. Nothing is too groſs or too refined, too cruel or too trifling to be practiſed; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hoſtility, but every weapon is accounted lawful, and thoſe that cannot make a thruſt at life are content to keep themſelves in play with petty malevolence, to teize with feeble blows and impotent diſturbance.

But as the induſtry of obſervation has divided the moſt miſcellaneous and confuſed aſſemblages into proper claſſes, and ranged the inſects of the ſummer, that torment us with their drones or ſtings, by their ſeveral tribes; the perſecutors of merit, notwithſtanding their numbers, may be likewiſe commodiouſly diſtinguiſhed into Roarers, Whiſperers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualification for a champion of controverſy than a hardened front and ſtrong voice. Having ſeldom ſo much deſire to confute as to ſilence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjuſt one part of his accuſation to another, to preſerve decency in his language, or probability in his narratives. He has always a ſtore of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occaſion may require, which by conſtant uſe he pours out with reſiſtleſs volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned,

mentioned, he without heſitation devotes him to bankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with ruſtick deformity; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeleſs idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the underſtanding by which it muſt be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon thoſe whom he compels to hear them; and though it will ſometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous miſtake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to ſuppreſs ſoon recover their former ſtrength, as the trees that bend to the tempeſt erect themſelves again when its force is paſt.

The Whiſperer is more dangerous. He eaſily gains attention by a ſoft addreſs, and excites curioſity by an air of importance. As ſecrets are not to be made cheap by promiſcuous publication, he calls a ſelect audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of truſt by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that though he ſeems to manage an extenſive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately ſuffered much by an expenſive project, and had a greater ſhare than is acknowledged in the rich ſhip that periſhed by the ſtorm. Of the beauty he has little to ſay, but that they who ſee her in a morning do not diſcover all theſe graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty, that, though the excellence of the work be inconteſtable, he can claim but a ſmall part of the reputation;

tion; that he owed moſt of the images and ſentiments to a ſecret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the ſtile was produced by the ſucceſſive correction of the chief criticks of the age.

As every one is pleaſed with imagining that he knows ſomething not yet commonly divulged, ſecret hiſtory eaſily gains credit; but it is for the moſt part believed only while it circulates in whiſpers, and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The moſt pernicious enemy is the man of Moderation. Without intereſt in the queſtion, or any motive but honeſt curioſity, this impartial and zealous enquirer after truth is ready to hear either ſide, and always diſpoſed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He hath heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and after a diligent compariſon of the evidence, concludes it probable that the ſplendid ſuperſtructure of buſineſs being originally built upon a narrow baſis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great diſtance; many merchants have ſupported themſelves by expedients for a time, without any final injury to their creditors; and what is loſt by one adventure may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady pleaſed with admiration, and deſirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements, but ſurely moſt of her beauties muſt be genuine, and who can ſay that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not ſparkle with the fire of *Homer*, but has the judgment to diſcover his own deficiencies, and to ſup-

ply

ply them by the help of others; and in his opinion modeſty is a quality ſo amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may juſtly be preferred by the publick ſuffrage to petulant wit and oſtentatious literature.

He who thus diſcovers failings with unwillingneſs, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repoſe upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuſe.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peeviſh, and the thoughtleſs, obſtruct that worth which they cannot equal, and by artifices thus eaſy, ſordid, and deteſtable, is induſtry defeated, beauty blaſted, and genius depreſſed.

NUMB. 145. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 6, 1751.

Non ſi priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Cæaque & Alcæi minaces
Steſichorique graves Camœnæ. HOR.

What though the muſe her *Homer* thrones
High above all the immortal quire;
Nor *Pindar*'s rapture ſhe diſowns,
Nor hides the plaintive *Cean* lyre:
Alcæus ſtrikes the tyrant's ſoul with dread,
Nor yet is grave *Steſichorus* unread. FRANCIS.

IT is allowed that vocations and employments of leaſt dignity are of the moſt apparent uſe; that the meaneſt artiſan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound ſcholar and argumentative theoriſt; and that

that the publick would ſuffer leſs preſent inconvenience from the baniſhment of philoſophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been ſo forcibly ſtruck with this obſervation, that they have, in the firſt warmth of their diſcovery, thought it reaſonable to alter the common diſtribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of univerſal ingratitude. For juſtice exacts that thoſe by whom we are moſt benefited ſhould be moſt honoured. And what labour can be more uſeful than that which procures to families and communities thoſe neceſſaries which ſupply the wants of nature, or thoſe conveniencies by which eaſe, ſecurity, and elegance, are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the firſt attempt to reduce them into practice certainly deſtroys. If we eſtimate dignity by immediate uſefulneſs, agriculture is undoubtedly the firſt and nobleſt ſcience; yet we ſee the plow driven, the clod broken, the manure ſpread, the ſeeds ſcattered, and the harveſt reaped, by men whom thoſe that feed upon their induſtry will never be perſuaded to admit into the ſame rank with heroes, or with ſages; and who, after all the confeſſions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, muſt be content to fill up the loweſt claſs of the commonwealth, to form the baſe of the pyramid of ſubordination, and lie buried in obſcurity themſelves, while they ſupport all that is ſplendid, conſpicuous, or exalted.

It will be found, upon a cloſer inſpection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reaſon or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the uſefulneſs

fulneſs and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjuſted by compariſon of the mental and corporeal abilities, which they appear to employ. That work, however neceſſary, which is carried on only by muſcular ſtrength and manual dexterity, is not of equal eſteem, in the conſideration of rational beings, with the taſks that exerciſe the intellectual powers, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious inveſtigations of reaſon.

The merit of all manual occupations ſeems to terminate in the inventor; and ſurely the firſt ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; ſince thoſe who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to ſecure themſelves from cold and hunger, were numbered amongſt their deities. But theſe arts once diſcovered by philoſophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practiſed with very little aſſiſtance from the faculties of the ſoul; nor is any thing neceſſary to the regular diſcharge of theſe inferior duties, beyond that rude obſervation which the moſt ſluggiſh intellect may practiſe, and that induſtry which the ſtimulations of neceſſity naturally enforce.

Yet, though the refuſal of ſtatues and panegyrick to thoſe who employ only their hands and feet in the ſervice of mankind may be eaſily juſtified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to juſtify the ſupercilioufneſs of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderneſs and benevolence which by the privilege of their common nature one man may claim from another.

That it would be neither wiſe nor equitable to diſcourage the huſbandman, the labourer, the miner,

ner, or the ſmith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obſcure and equally indigent, who, becauſe their uſefulneſs is leſs obvious to vulgar apprehenſions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long expoſed to inſult without a defender, and to cenſure without an apologiſt.

The authors of *London* were formerly computed by *Swift* at ſeveral thouſands, and there is not any reaſon for ſuſpecting that their number has decreaſed. Of theſe only a very few can be ſaid to produce, or endeavour to produce new ideas, to extend any principle of ſcience, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the reſt, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be conſidered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have ſet up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and, like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the ſtated time.

It has been formerly imagined, that he who intends the entertainment or inſtruction of others, muſt feel in himſelf ſome peculiar impulſe of genius; that he muſt watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler ſentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with ſtronger comprehenſion; that he muſt carefully ſelect his thoughts and poliſh his expreſſions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raiſing a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy ſhall be able to deſtroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend have been too long *hackneyed in the*

ways

ways of men to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have ſeldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried ſome other without ſucceſs; they perceive no particular ſummons to compoſition, except the ſound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the faſhion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and about the opinion of poſterity they have little ſolicitude, for their productions are ſeldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That ſuch authors are not to be rewarded with praiſe is evident, ſince nothing can be admired when it ceaſes to exiſt; but ſurely though they cannot aſpire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted in that order of men which deſerves our kindneſs though not our reverence. Theſe papers of the day, the *Ephemeræ* of learning, have uſes more adequate to the purpoſes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is neceſſary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with paſt generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kingdoms, in which he has neither poſſeſſions nor expectations; if it be pleaſing to hear of the preferment and diſmiſſion of ſtateſmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes muſt be conſidered as a liberal diſpenſer of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger, compiler, and tranſlator, though their labours cannot be ranked with thoſe of the diurnal hiſtoriographer, yet muſt not be raſhly doomed to annihilation. Every ſize of read-

ers requires a genius of correſpondent capacity; ſome delight in abſtracts and epitomes, becauſe they want room in their memory for long details, and content themſelves with effects, without enquiry after cauſes; ſome minds are overpowered by ſplendor of ſentiment, as ſome eyes are offended by a glaring light; ſuch will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the ſun in the water.

As every writer has his uſe, every writer ought to have his patrons; and ſince no man, however high he may now ſtand, can be certain that he ſhall not be ſoon thrown down from his elevation by criticiſm or caprice, the common intereſt of learning requires that her ſons ſhould ceaſe from inteſtine hoſtilities, and inſtead of ſacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert perſecution from the meaneſt of their fraternity.

NUMB. 146. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, treſve, qui revolvant
Noſtrarum tineas ineptiarum:
Sed cum ſponſio, fabulæque laſſæ
De ſcorpo fuerint et incitato. MART.

'Tis poſſible that one or two
Theſe fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings muſt be o'er,
Nor *Crab* or *Childers* talk'd of more. F. LEWIS.

NONE of the projects or deſigns which exerciſe the mind of man are equally ſubject to obſtructions and diſappointments with the purſuit of fame. Riches cannot eaſily be denied to them who have ſomething of greater value to offer in

exchange; he whoſe fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuſe to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whoſe days are darkened by languor, or whoſe nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the ſcience of healing. But praiſe may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity neceſſary to his happineſs, he has put it in the power of the weakeſt and moſt timorous malignity, if not to take away his ſatisfaction, at leaſt to withold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by ſilence; as the women of *Rome* threatened to put an end to conqueſt and dominion, by ſupplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burſt upon mankind with unexpected luſtre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controverſy or enquiry, he is ſeldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praiſes. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in diſguiſe, to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feaſt upon admiration; compoſed to encounter cenſures without emotion; and determined not to ſuffer his quiet to be injured by a ſenſibility too exquiſite of praiſe or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled converſation, ſits down to his tea in an obſcure corner, and while he appears to examine a file of antiquated jour-

nals, catches the converſation of the whole room. He liſtens, but hears no mention of his book, and therefore ſuppoſes that he has diſappointed his curioſity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their converſation with ſuch a wonderful novelty, they had digreſſed to other ſubjects before his arrival. The company diſperſes, and their places are ſupplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careleſs. The ſame expectation hurries him to another place, from which the ſame diſappointment drives him ſoon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with reſtleſs curioſity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pick-pocket; is told by ſome of an unexpected bankruptcy, by others of a turtle feaſt; is ſometimes provoked by importunate enquiries after the white bear, and ſometimes with praiſes of the dancing dog; he is afterwards entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to ſee a foot-race in the adjacent villages; deſired to read a ludicrous advertiſement; or conſulted about the moſt effectual method of making enquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is buſied in affairs, which he thinks below the notice of reaſonable creatures, and which are nevertheleſs ſufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He reſolves at laſt to violate his own modeſty, and to recall the talkers from their folly by an enquiry after himſelf. He finds every one provided with an anſwer; one has ſeen the work advertiſed, but never met with any that had read it; another has been ſo often impoſed upon by

ſpecious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is eſtabliſhed; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after ſo many writers of greater eminence; the next has enquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore ſuſpects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not underſtand.

Many are the conſolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the underſtanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which ſolid knowledge, and delicate refinement, have given way to low merriment, and idle buffoonry, and therefore no writer can hope for diſtinction, who has any higher purpoſe than to raiſe laughter. He finds that his enemies, ſuch as ſuperiority will always raiſe, have been induſtrious, while his performance was in the preſs, to vilify and blaſt it; and that the bookſeller, whom he had reſolved to enrich, has rivals that obſtruct the circulation of his copies. He at laſt repoſes upon the conſideration, that the nobleſt works of learning and genius have always made their way ſlowly againſt ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation which is never to be loſt, muſt be gradually obtained, as animals of longeſt life are obſerved not ſoon to attain their full ſtature and ſtrength.

By ſuch arts of voluntary deluſion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himſelf. It is long before we are convinced of the ſmall proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn

how few can be intereſted in the fortune of any ſingle man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how ſmall extent the brighteſt blaze of merit can be ſpread amidſt the miſts of buſineſs and of folly; and how ſoon it is clouded by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will eaſily outlive all noiſy and popular reputation: he may be celebrated for a time by the publick voice, but his actions and his name will ſoon be conſidered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by thoſe whoſe alliance gives them ſome vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It ſeems not to be ſufficiently conſidered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually buſy by their fears or deſires, and have not more leiſure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themſelves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving ſome refuge from calamity, or in ſhortening the way to ſome new poſſeſſion, they ſeldom ſuffer their thoughts to wander to the paſt or future; none but a few ſolitary ſtudents have leiſure to enquire into the claims of ancient heroes or ſages; and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents ſhrink at laſt into cloiſters or colleges.

Nor is it certain, that even of theſe dark and narrow habitations, theſe laſt retreats of fame, the poſſeſſion will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature very few extend their views beyond ſome particular ſcience, and the greater part ſeldom enquire, even in their own profeſſion, for any authors but thoſe whom the preſent mode of ſtudy hap-

pens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulph of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect, that he must himself sink in like manner, and as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens, that fame begins when life is at an end; but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and since it is so difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or friendship can scarcely support it?

NUMB. 147. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invitâ dices faciesve Minervâ. HOR.

——You are of too quick a ſight,
Not to diſcern which way your talent lies.

ROSCOMMON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous perſecution, which, though it produces no ſcenes of horror or of ruin, yet, by inceſſant importunity of vexation, wears away my happineſs, and conſumes thoſe years which nature ſeems particularly to have aſſigned to cheerfulneſs, in ſilent anxiety and helpleſs reſentment.

I am the eldeſt ſon of a gentleman, who having inherited a large eſtate from his anceſtors, and feeling no deſire either to increaſe or leſſen it, has from the time of his marriage generally reſided at his own ſeat; where, by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a maſter, and a magiſtrate, the ſtudy of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himſelf of the day, without any of thoſe amuſements, which all thoſe with whom my reſidence in this place has made me acquainted think neceſſary to lighten the burthen of exiſtence.

When my age made me capable of inſtruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at *Oxford* for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my edu-

cation. The regard with which I ſaw him treated diſpoſed me to conſider his inſtructions as important, and I therefore ſoon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering compariſons of my own proficiency with that of others, either leſs docile by nature, or leſs happily forwarded by inſtruction. I was careſſed by all that exchanged viſits with my father; and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themſelves, began to think that cloſe application was no longer neceſſary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amuſement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praiſe and admiration.

While I was thus banquetting upon my own perfections, and longing in ſecret to eſcape from tutorage, my father's brother came from *London* to paſs a ſummer at his native place. A lucrative employment which he poſſeſſed, and a fondneſs for the converſation and diverſions of the gay part of mankind, had ſo long kept him from rural excurſions, that I had never ſeen him ſince my infancy. My curioſity was therefore ſtrongly excited by the hope of obſerving a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a diſtance.

From all private and intimate converſation I was long withheld by the perpetual confluence of viſitants, with whom the firſt news of my uncle's arrival crouded the houſe; but was amply recompenſed by ſeeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the ſtratagems

tagems of endearment, the gradations of reſpect, and variations of courteſy. I remarked with what juſtice of diſtribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what addreſs he offered to every man an occaſion of indulging ſome favourite topick, or diſplaying ſome particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his enquiries after the abſent; and the care with which he ſhewed all the companions of his early years how ſtrongly they were infixed in his memory, by the mention of paſt incidents, and the recital of puerile kindneſſes, dangers, and frolicks. I ſoon diſcovered that he poſſeſſed ſome ſcience of graciouſneſs and attraction which books had not taught, and of which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging thoſe whom he did not benefit; that he diffuſed upon his curſory behaviour and moſt trifling actions a gloſs of ſoftneſs and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that by ſome occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, ſoftened the ſupercilious, and opened the reſerved. I could not but repine at the inelegance of my own manners which left me no hopes but not to offend, and at the inefficacy of ruſtick benevolence which gained no friends but by real ſervice.

My uncle ſaw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every motion of his hand; and the aukward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embrace of fondneſs, and his bow of reſpect. He was, like others, eaſily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my aſſiduities with compliments

and profeſſions. Our fondneſs was ſo increaſed by a mutual endeavour to pleaſe each other, that when he returned to *London*, he declared himſelf unable to leave a nephew ſo amiable and ſo accompliſhed behind him; and obtained my father's permiſſion to enjoy my company for a few months, by a promiſe to initiate me in the arts of politeneſs, and introduce me into publick life.

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very ſlowly, afforded me time for more looſe and familiar converſation; but I ſoon found, that by a few enquiries which he was not well prepared to ſatisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed aſſembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topicks, kept the tongue employed with very little aſſiſtance from memory or reflexion; but in the chariot, where he was neceſſitated to ſupport a regular tenour of converſation, without any relief from a new comer, or any power of ſtarting into gay digreſſions, or deſtroying argument by a jeſt, he ſoon diſcovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinſel of politeneſs. The firſt day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I ſhould be aſtoniſhed at my entrance into *London*, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wiſdom againſt the arts by which ruſticity is frequently deluded. The ſame detail and the ſame advice he would have repeated on the ſecond day; but as I every moment diverted the diſcourſe to the hiſtory of the towns by which we paſſed, or ſome other ſubject of learning or of reaſon, he ſoon loſt his vivacity, grew peeviſh and ſilent,

ſilent, wrapped his cloke about him, compoſed himſelf to ſlumber, and reſerved his gaiety for fitter auditors.

At length I entered *London*, and my uncle was reinſtated in his ſuperiority. He awaked at once to loquacity as ſoon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every ſtreet as we croſſed it, and owner of every houſe as we paſſed by. He preſented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances, and ſplendor of her aſſemblies, and either in kindneſs or revenge conſulted with her, in my preſence, how I might be moſt advantageouſly dreſſed for my firſt appearance, and moſt expeditiouſly diſencumbered from my villatick baſhfulneſs. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous fluſhed in my face; they miſtook anger for ſhame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of publick education, and the happineſs of an aſſurance early acquired.

Aſſurance is indeed the only qualification to which they ſeem to have annexed merit, and aſſurance therefore is perpetually recommended to me as the ſupply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never ſit ſilent in company when ſecret hiſtory is circulating, but I am reproached for want of aſſurance. If I fail to return the ſtated anſwer to a compliment; if I am diſconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I bluſh when I am diſcovered gazing on a beauty, or heſitate when I find myſelf embarraſſed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not underſtand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I

ſuffer a more lively tatler to recount the caſualties of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am cenſured between pity and contempt, as a wretch doomed to grovel in obſcurity for want of aſſurance.

I have found many young perſons harraſſed in the ſame manner by thoſe to whom age has given nothing but the aſſurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it uſeful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whoſe ſtupidity has armed him againſt the ſhafts of ridicule, will always act and ſpeak with greater audacity than they whoſe ſenſibility repreſſes their ardor, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

NUMB. 148. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 17, 1751.

Me pater ſævis oneret catenis
Quod viro clemens miſero peperci,
Me vel extremis Numidarum in oris
Claſſe releget. HOR.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or baniſh to *Numidia*'s fartheſt plains;
My crime, that I a loyal wife,
In kind compaſſion ſpar'd my huſband's life. FRANCIS.

POLITICIANS remark, that no oppreſſion is ſo heavy or laſting as that which is inflicted by the perverſion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be ſeized, and the invader repelled, whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force

force be puniſhed or ſuppreſſed. But when plunder bears the name of impoſt, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial ſentence, fortitude is intimidated and wiſdom confounded; reſiſtance ſhrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains ſecure in the robes of the magiſtrate.

Equally dangerous and equally deteſtable are the cruelties often exerciſed in private families, under the venerable ſanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the firſt moments of reaſon; which is guarded from inſult and violation by all that can impreſs awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without controul, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable tranſgreſſions, before duty and piety will dare to ſeek redreſs, or think themſelves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than ſupplications by which inſolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the *Romans*, that no ſon could be the murderer of his father; and they had therefore no puniſhment appropriated to parricide. They ſeem likewiſe to have believed with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child; and therefore they allowed every man the ſupreme judicature in his own houſe, and put the lives of his offſpring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees, that they had determined too haſtily in favour of human nature; they found that inſtinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the neareſt relation might be violated; and that power, to whomſoever entruſted,

truſted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to ſupply and to change their inſtitutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital puniſhments from the parent to the magiſtrate.

There are indeed many houſes which it is impoſſible to enter familiarly, without diſcovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonſtrances but from his own conſcience, will ſeldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying juſtice by his own will.

If in any ſituation the heart were inacceſſible to malignity, it might be ſuppoſed to be ſufficiently ſecured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occaſion of its exiſtence, produces an obligation to make that exiſtence happy. To ſee helpleſs infancy ſtretching out her hands and pouring out her cries in teſtimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealouſy, or any guilt to alienate affection, muſt ſurely awaken tenderneſs in every human mind; and tenderneſs once excited will be hourly increaſed by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercuſſion of communicated pleaſure, by the conſciouſneſs of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can ſee the vileſt animal courting his regard, and ſhrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in diſtreſs, and flying to him in danger, without more kindneſs than he can perſuade himſelf to feel for the wild and unſocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourſelves thoſe to whom we impart

impart any kind of pleaſure, becauſe we imagine their affection and eſteem ſecured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is indeed another method by which the pride of ſuperiority may be likewiſe gratified. He that has extinguiſhed all the ſenſations of humanity, and has no longer any ſatisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the diſtributor of happineſs, may pleaſe himſelf with exciting terror as the inflicter of pain: he may delight his ſolitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands, in imagining the deſires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the diſcontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it: he may amuſe himſelf with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of puniſhment; and ſwell with exultation when he conſiders how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the hiſtory of all abſolute kingdoms will inform us; and ſince, as *Ariſtotle* obſerves, ἡ οἰκονομικὴ μοναρχία, *the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is like other monarchies too often arbitrarily adminiſtered. The regal and parental tyrant differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their ſlaves. The ſame paſſions cauſe the ſame miſeries; except that ſeldom any prince, however deſpotick, has ſo far ſhaken off all awe of the publick eye, as to venture upon thoſe freaks of injuſtice, which are ſometimes indulged under the ſecrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial deciſions, unequal allotments, diſtributions of reward

ward not by merit but by fancy, and puniſhments regulated not by the degree of the offence, but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the miſery of others no man will confeſs, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? The king may be inſtigated by one man to the deſtruction of another; he may ſometimes think himſelf endangered by the virtues of a ſubject; he may dread the ſucceſsful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiſcations; and his guilt may whiſper that he can only be ſecure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppreſſion of thoſe who were born to his protection, of thoſe who can diſturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no ſpoils? Why cowards are cruel may be eaſily diſcovered; but for what reaſon not more infamous than cowardice can that man delight in oppreſſion who has nothing to fear?

The unjuſtifiable ſeverity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that thoſe whom he injures are always in his ſight. The injuſtice of a prince is often exerciſed upon thoſe of whom he never had any perſonal or particular knowledge; and the ſentence which he pronounces, whether of baniſhment, impriſonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domeſtick oppreſſor dooms himſelf to gaze upon thoſe faces which he clouds with terror and with ſorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear

to

to give continual pain to thoſe who ſurround him, and can walk with ſatisfaction in the gloom of his own preſence; he that can ſee ſubmiſſive miſery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy, or demands juſtice, will ſcarcely be amended by remonſtrance or admonition; he has found means of ſtopping the avenues of tenderneſs, and arming his heart againſt the force of reaſon.

Even though no conſideration ſhould be paid to the great law of ſocial beings, by which every individual is commanded to conſult the happineſs of others, yet the harſh parent is leſs to be vindicated than any other criminal, becauſe he leſs provides for the happineſs of himſelf. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he ſhall ſink back to imbecillity, and muſt depend for eaſe and cheerfulneſs upon the officiouſneſs of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniences of old age, who alienates from him the aſſiſtance of his children, and whoſe bed muſt be ſurrounded in his laſt hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by ſtrangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is deſirable?

Piety will indeed in good minds overcome provocation, and thoſe who have been harraſſed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have ſuffered, ſo far as to perform the laſt duties with alacrity and zeal. But ſurely no reſentment can be equally painful with kindneſs thus undeſerved, nor can ſeverer puniſhment be imprecated upon a man not wholly loſt in meanneſs and ſtupidity, than,

than, through the tediouſneſs of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindneſs of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miſeries, not to gratitude but to mercy.

NUMB. 149. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 20, 1751.

Quod non ſit Pylades hoc tempore, non ſit Oreſtes
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turduſve dabatur Oreſti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.———
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me tinguis Gallia veſtit:
Vis te purpureum, Marce, ſagatus amem?
Ut præſtem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præſtet Oreſtem;
Hoc non ſit verbis: Marce, ut ameris, ama.

You wonder now that no man ſees
Such friends as thoſe of ancient *Greece*.
Here lay the point——*Oreſtes'* meat
Was juſt the ſame his friend did eat;
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, *Pylades*, than thine.
In home-ſpun ruſſet I am dreſt,
Your cloth is always of the beſt;
But honeſt *Marcus*, if you pleaſe
To chuſe me for your *Pylades*,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love——if you wou'd be lov'd again. F. LEWIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

NO depravity of the mind has been more frequently or juſtly cenſured than ingratitude. There is indeed ſufficient reaſon for looking on thoſe that can return evil for good, and repay kindneſs and aſſiſtance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted

rupted beyond the common degrees of wickedneſs; nor will he who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deſerve to be numbered among ſocial beings; he has endeavoured to deſtroy confidence, to intercept ſympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himſelf.

There is always danger leſt the honeſt abhorrence of a crime ſhould raiſe the paſſions with too much violence againſt the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous, it ought to be aſcertained by ſtronger evidence. The charge againſt ingratitude is very general; almoſt every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon inſenſibility, and how much happineſs he has beſtowed without return; but perhaps, if theſe patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boaſt of having befriended, it would often appear that they conſulted only their pleaſure or vanity, and repaid themſelves their petty donatives by gratifications of inſolence and indulgence of contempt.

It has happened that much of my time has been paſſed in a dependent ſtate, and conſequently I have received many favours in the opinion of thoſe at whoſe expence I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and, as I would not willingly ſuppoſe myſelf leſs ſuſceptible of virtuous paſſions than the reſt of mankind, I ſhall lay the hiſtory of my life before you, that you may, by your judgment of my conduct, either reform or confirm my preſent ſentiments.

My father was the ſecond ſon of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth,

birth, whoſe fortune, joined to his own, might have ſupported his poſterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a poſt, which gave him an opportunity of diſplaying his elegance and politeneſs. My mother was equally pleaſed with ſplendor, and equally careleſs of expence; they both juſtified their profuſion to themſelves, by endeavouring to believe it neceſſary to the extenſion of their acquaintance and improvement of their intereſt; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midſt of theſe hopes my father was ſnatched away by an apoplexy; and my mother, who had no pleaſure but in dreſs, equipage, aſſemblies, and compliments, finding that ſhe could live no longer in her accuſtomed rank, ſunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and diſcontent.

I was ſent with a ſiſter, one year younger than myſelf, to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of obſerving how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourſelves on the road with the tenderneſs and regard with which we ſhould be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young couſins, and for the firſt month more frequently conſoled than upbraided; but in a ſhort time we found our prattle repreſſed, our dreſs neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requeſts referred to the houſekeeper.

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new inſults. We were ſoon brought to the neceſſity of receding from our imagined equality with our couſins, to whom we ſunk

ſunk into humble companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their deſires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us ſuch an appearance of ſuperiority to the awkward baſhfulneſs of our relations, as naturally drew reſpect and preference from every ſtranger; and my aunt was forced to aſſert the dignity of her own children, while they were ſculking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in ſilent confuſion, by relating the indiſcretion of our father, diſplaying her own kindneſs, lamenting the miſery of birth without eſtate, and declaring her anxiety for our future proviſion, and the expedients which ſhe had formed to ſecure us from thoſe follies or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occaſion. In a ſhort time care was taken to prevent ſuch vexatious miſtakes; we were told, that fine clothes would only fill our heads with falſe expectations, and our dreſs was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

Childhood is not eaſily dejected or mortified. We felt no laſting pain from inſolence or neglect; but finding that we were favoured and commended by all whoſe intereſt did not prompt them to diſcountenance us, preſerved our vivacity and ſpirit to years of greater ſenſibility. It then became irkſome and diſguſting to live without any principle of action but the will of another, and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to eaſe our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peeviſhneſs, and affront.

There are innumerable modes of inſult and tokens of contempt, for which it is not eaſy to find

find a name, which vaniſh to nothing in an attempt to deſcribe them, and yet may, by continual repetition, make day paſs after day in ſorrow and in terror. Phraſes of curſory compliment and eſtabliſhed ſalutation may by a different modulation of the voice or caſt of the countenance convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of reſpect to expreſſions of ſcorn. The dependant who cultivates delicacy in himſelf very little conſults his own tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment diſcovering ſome petulance of accent, or arrogance of mien, ſome vehemence of interrogation, or quickneſs of reply, that recalls my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to reſent it.

You are not however to imagine, that I think myſelf diſcharged from the duties of gratitude, only becauſe my relations do not adjuſt their looks or tune their voices to my expectation. The inſolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeneſs or obliquities of inſult. I am often told in expreſs terms of the miſeries from which charity has ſnatched me, while multitudes are ſuffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the pariſh; and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the ſame table with my couſins.

That I ſit at the firſt table I muſt acknowledge, but I ſit there only that I may feel the ſtings of inferiority. My enquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborn, my aſſertions are controverted; and as inſolence always propagates itſelf, the ſervants overlook me, in imitation of their maſter; if I call modeſtly, I am not heard; if loudly, my uſurpation of authority is checked by a general frown.

frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and ſometimes deſired to riſe upon very ſlight pretences.

The incivilities to which I am expoſed would give me leſs pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my ſiſter, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine perſecution. As it is ſaid of the ſupreme magiſtrate of *Venice*, that he is a prince in one place and a ſlave in another, my ſiſter is a ſervant to her couſins in their apartments, and a companion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw ſo much regard away from them, that they never ſuffer her to appear with them in any place where they ſolicit notice, or expect admiration; and when they are viſited by neighbouring ladies, and paſs their hours in domeſtick amuſements, ſhe is ſometimes called to fill a vacancy, inſulted with contemptuous freedoms, and diſmiſſed to her needle when her place is ſupplied. The heir has of late, by the inſtigation of his ſiſters, begun to harraſs her with clowniſh jocularity; he ſeems inclined to make his firſt rude eſſays of waggery upon her; and by the connivance, if not encouragement of his father, treats her with ſuch licentious brutality, as I cannot bear, though I cannot puniſh it.

I beg to be informed, Mr. RAMBLER, how much we can be ſuppoſed to owe to beneficence, exerted on terms like theſe? to beneficence which pollutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly ſaid to pander to pride? I would willingly be told, whether inſolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts ſervility can with juſtice at the ſame time expect affection?

I am, Sir, &c.

HYPERDULUS.

NUMB. 150. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 24, 1751.

O munera nondum
Intellecta Deûm! LUCAN.

——————Thou chiefeſt good!
Beſtow'd by Heav'n, but ſeldom underſtood. ROWE.

AS daily experience makes it evident that miſfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor eſcaped by flight; neither awed by greatneſs, nor eluded by obſcurity; philoſophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by perſuading us that moſt of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverſeneſs, and that nature has annexed to every viciſſitude of external circumſtances, ſome advantage ſufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may perhaps be juſtly ſuſpected of reſemblance to the practice of phyſicians, who, when they cannot mitigate pain, deſtroy ſenſibility, and endeavour to conceal by opiates the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyriſts of calamity have more frequently gained applauſe to their wit, than acquieſcence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the moſt muſical oratory or ſubtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguiſh of oppreſſion, the tediouſneſs of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that where much has been attempted, ſomething has been performed; though the diſcoveries or acquiſitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations

tions of his pride, they are at leaſt ſufficient to animate his induſtry. The antidotes with which philoſophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it ſalubrity and ſweetneſs, have at leaſt allayed its bitterneſs, and contempered its malignity; the balm which ſhe drops upon the wounds of the mind abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By ſuffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we ſecure ourſelves from vain and immoderate diſquiet; we preſerve for better purpoſes that ſtrength which would be unprofitably waſted in wild efforts of deſperation, and maintain that circumſpection which may enable us to ſeize every ſupport, and improve every alleviation. This calmneſs will be more eaſily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled unabated evil, and diverted to thoſe accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every ſtate.

Seneca has attempted not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almoſt to allure us to it, by repreſenting it as neceſſary to the pleaſures of the mind. *He that never was acquainted with adverſity*, ſays he, *has ſeen the world but on one ſide, and is ignorant of half the ſcenes of nature.* He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the paſſenger to their coaſts, by promiſing that he ſhall return πλέονα εἰδὼς, with increaſe of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

Curioſity is, in great and generous minds, the firſt paſſion and the laſt; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the ſtrength of the contemplative faculties. He who eaſily comprehends all that is before him, and ſoon exhauſts

any ſingle ſubject, is always eager for new enquiries; and in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider proſpect, it muſt be gratified with variety by more rapid flights, and bolder excurſions; nor perhaps can there be propoſed to thoſe who have been accuſtomed to the pleaſures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reaſon.

When *Jaſon*, in *Valerius Flaccus*, would incline the young prince *Acaſtus* to accompany him in the firſt eſſay of navigation, he diſperſes his apprehenſions of danger by repreſentations of the new tracts of earth and heaven which the expedition would ſpread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return, of the countries which they ſhall have ſeen, and the toils which they have ſurmounted.

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoſcere cœli,
Permiſſum eſt! pelagus quantos aperimus in uſus?
Nunc forſan grave veris opus: ſed læta recurret
Cum ratis, & caram cum jam mihi reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu noſtros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam viſas tua per ſuſpiria gentes!

Led by our ſtars, what tracts immenſe we trace!
From ſeas remote, what funds of ſcience raiſe!
A pain to thought! but when th' heroick band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domeſtick you will then deplore,
And ſigh, while I deſcribe the various ſhore.

EDW. CAVE.

Acaſtus was ſoon prevailed upon by his curioſity to ſet rocks and hardſhips at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the ſame motives have

have in all ages had the ſame effect upon thoſe whom the deſire of fame or wiſdom has diſtinguiſhed from the lower orders of mankind.

If therefore it can be proved that diſtreſs is neceſſary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy ſituation hides from us ſo large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the ſight of affluence and ſplendor will be much diminiſhed; for ſuch is the delight of mental ſuperiority, that none on whom nature or ſtudy have conferred it, would purchaſe the gifts of fortune by its loſs.

It is certain, that however the rhetorick of *Seneca* may have dreſſed adverſity with extrinſick ornaments, he has juſtly repreſented it as affording ſome opportunities of obſervation, which cannot be found in continual ſucceſs; he has truly aſſerted, that to eſcape misfortune is to want inſtruction, and that to live at eaſe is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happineſs without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is neceſſary to a juſt ſenſe of better fortune; for the good of our preſent ſtate is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be ſufficient to diſturb and harraſs him, if he does not know how much he eſcapes. The luſtre of diamonds is invigorated by the interpoſition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the ſhades. The higheſt pleaſure which nature has indulged to ſenſitive perception, is that of reſt after fatigue; yet that ſtate which labour heightens into delight is of itſelf only eaſe, and is incapable of ſatisfying the mind without the ſuperaddition of diverſified amuſements.

Proſperity, as is truly aſſerted by *Seneca*, very much obſtructs the knowledge of ourſelves. No man can form a juſt eſtimate of his own powers by unactive ſpeculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has ſurmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at beſt be conſidered but as gold not yet brought to the teſt, of which therefore the true value cannot be aſſigned. *He that traverſes the liſts without an adverſary, may receive*, ſays the philoſopher, *the reward of victory, but he has no pretenſions to the honour*. If it be the higheſt happineſs of man to contemplate himſelf with ſatisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conſcience, he whoſe courage has made way amidſt the turbulence of oppoſition, and whoſe vigour has broken through the ſnares of diſtreſs, has many advantages over theſe that have ſlept in the ſhades of indolence, and whoſe retroſpect of time can entertain them with nothing but day riſing upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally neceſſary is ſome variety of fortune to a nearer inſpection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their ſubjects, find it neceſſary to ſteal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is ſhown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reaſonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm ſuſpicion, or excite reſentment, is carefully ſuppreſſed,

preſſed, and nothing appears but uniformity of ſentiments and ardour of affection. It may be obſerved that the unvaried complaiſance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unſkilled in human nature; proſperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore muſt be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is ſcarcely to be heard but by thoſe from whom it can ſerve no intereſt to conceal it.

NUMB. 151. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 27, 1751.

Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαις
ἀναρίθμητοι κρίρανται
τοῦτο δ' ἀμήχανον ἐυρεῖν
Ὅτι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τιλευ-
τᾷ φίρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν. PIND.

But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliſs is ever inſecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the preſent ſhall endure? WEST.

THE writers of medicine and phyſiology have traced, with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the conſtitution, and the ſeveral ſtages by which animal life makes its progreſs from infancy to decrepitude. Though their obſervations have not enabled them to diſcover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet ſurely, if they be conſidered only as the amuſements of curioſity, they are

of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed ſtars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a taſk worthy of the moral philoſophers to have conſidered with equal care the climacterick of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every paſſion begins and ceaſes to predominate, and noted the regular variations of deſire, and the ſucceſſion of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be ſtated with equal certainty: Our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend ſo little on our own management, that ſomething more than negligence is neceſſary to diſcompoſe their ſtructure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed in a great meaſure firſt to the direction of others, and afterwards of ourſelves. It would be difficult to protract the weakneſs of infancy beyond the uſual time, but the mind may be very eaſily hindered from its ſhare of improvement, and the bulk and ſtrength of manhood muſt, without the aſſiſtance of education and inſtruction, be informed only with the underſtanding of a child.

Yet amidſt all the diſorder and inequality which variety of diſcipline, example, converſation and employment produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is ſtill diſcovered by a vigilant ſpectator, ſuch a general and remote ſimilitude as may be expected in the ſame common nature affected by external circumſtances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the ſame objects, and have our firſt pains and pleaſures, our firſt

firſt hopes and fears, our firſt averſions and deſires, from the ſame cauſes; and though, as we proceed farther, life opens wider proſpects to our view, and accidental impulſes determine us to different paths, yet as every mind, however vigorous or abſtracted, is neceſſitated in its preſent ſtate of union, to receive its informations, and execute its purpoſes, by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itſelf to our intellectual operations; and thoſe whoſe abilities or knowledge incline them moſt to deviate from the general round of life are recalled from excentricity by the laws of their exiſtence.

If we conſider the exerciſes of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life ſome particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treaſures of knowledge are firſt opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined ſeems of equal value, the power of the ſoul is principally exerted in a vivacious and deſultory curioſity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a ſhort time, and flies with equal ardour to another. She delights to catch up looſe and unconnected ideas, but ſtarts away from ſyſtems and complications which would obſtruct the rapidity of her tranſitions, and detain her long in the ſame purſuit.

When a number of diſtinct images are collected by theſe erratick and haſty ſurveys, the fancy is buſied in arranging them; and combines them into pleaſing pictures with more reſemblance to the realities of life as experience advances, and new obſervations rectify the former. While the

judgment is yet uninformed and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters: But in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourſelves with living nature, we are ſooner diſguſted with copies in which there appears no reſemblance. We firſt diſcard abſurdity and impoſſibility, than exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at laſt become cold and inſenſible to the charms of falſehood, however ſpecious, and from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affection to truth itſelf.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reaſon; we begin to find little pleaſure but in comparing arguments, ſtating propoſitions, diſentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing conſequences. The painted vales of imagination are deſerted, and our intellectual activity is exerciſed in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious ſteps up the narrow tracks of demonſtration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or miſlead attention, is contemptuouſly rejected, and every diſguiſe in which error may be concealed, is carefully obſerved, till by degrees a certain number of inconteſtable or unſuſpected propoſitions are eſtabliſhed, and at laſt concatenated into arguments, or compacted into ſyſtems.

At length wearineſs ſucceeds to labour, and the mind lies at eaſe in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any deſire of new conqueſts or excurſions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are ſettled, and the avenues

avenues of apprehenſion ſhut againſt any new intelligence; the days that are to follow muſt paſs in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and aſſertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward ſo odious as oppoſition, ſo inſolent as doubt, or ſo dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the paſſions uſurp the ſeparate command of the ſucceſſive periods of life. To the happineſs of our firſt years nothing more ſeems neceſſary than freedom from reſtraint: Every man may remember that if he was left to himſelf, and indulged in the diſpoſal of his own time, he was once content without the ſuperaddition of any actual pleaſure. The new world is itſelf a banquet, and till we have exhauſted the freſhneſs of life, we have always about us ſufficient gratifications: The ſunſhine quickens us to play, and the ſhade invites us to ſleep.

But we ſoon become unſatisfied with negative felicity, and are ſolicited by our ſenſes and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taſte of him who has ſatisfied his hunger muſt be excited by artificial ſtimulations. The ſimplicity of natural amuſement is now paſt, and art and contrivance muſt improve our pleaſures; but in time, art, like nature, is exhauſted, and the ſenſes can no longer ſupply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleaſure to intereſt, in which pleaſure is perhaps included, though diffuſed to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear but the voice of fame; wealth, to which, however variouſly de-

nominated, every man at ſome time or other aſpires; power, which all wiſh to obtain within their circle of action; and fame, which no man, however high or mean, however wiſe or ignorant, was yet able to deſpiſe. Now prudence and foreſight exert their influence: No hour is devoted wholly to any preſent enjoyment, no act or purpoſe terminates in itſelf, but every motion is referred to ſome diſtant end; the accompliſhment of one deſign begins another, and the ultimate wiſh is always puſhed off to its former diſtance.

At length fame is obſerved to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whoſe vigour and alacrity begin to forſake him, by degrees contracts his deſigns, remits his former multiplicity of purſuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than his power. Avarice is generally the laſt paſſion of thoſe lives of which the firſt part has been ſquandered in pleaſure, and the ſecond devoted to ambition. He that ſinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder buſineſs of ſaving it.

I have in this view of life conſidered men as actuated only by natural deſires, and yielding to their own inclinations without regard to ſuperior principles by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of paſſions reſtrained. Nature will indeed always operate, human deſires will be always ranging; but theſe motions, though very powerful, are not reſiſtleſs; nature may be regulated, and deſires governed; and to contend with the predominance of ſucceſſive paſſions, to be endangered

dangered firſt by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to paſs our time, the time of our preparation for that ſtate which ſhall put an end to experiment, to diſappointment, and to change.

NUMB. 152. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 31, 1751.

Triſtia mæſtum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum. HOR.

Diſaſtrous words can beſt diſaſter ſhow;
In angry phraſe the angry paſſions glow. ELPHINSTON.

"IT was the wiſdom, ſays *Seneca*, of ancient "times, to conſider what is moſt uſeful as "moſt illuſtrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, ſcarcely any ſpecies of compoſition deſerves more to be cultivated than the epiſtolary ſtile, ſince none is of more various or frequent uſe, through the whole ſubordination of human life.

It has yet happened that among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to thoſe of any other country, very few have endeavoured to diſtinguiſh themſelves by the publication of letters, except ſuch as were written in the diſcharge of publick truſts, and during the tranſaction of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the miniſter, and memorials to the hiſtorian, are of no uſe as examples of the familiar ſtile, or models of private correſpondence.

If it be enquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themſelves with ſo little danger in ſpeaking and writing, may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it muſt be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due ſenſe of the dignity of the publick? We do not think it reaſonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the buſy, or the amuſements of the gay, ſhould give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of abſence, expreſſions of fondneſs, or declarations of fidelity.

A ſlight peruſal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of *France* have ſignalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be diſcouraged from the like attempts by the conſciouſneſs of inability; for ſurely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory profeſſions, accumulate ſervile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the deſpicable remains of *Voiture* and *Scarron*.

Yet as much of life muſt be paſſed in affairs conſiderable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleaſure which our condition allows, muſt be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is neceſſary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the neceſſary intercourſe of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage if ſuch of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating inſignificance, had ſupplied us with a few ſallies of innocent

innocent gaiety, effuſions of honeſt tenderneſs, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been poſterior to performance. The art of compoſing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of thoſe who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewiſe few criticiſms upon the epiſtolary ſtile. The obſervation with which *Walſh* has introduced his pages of inanity are ſuch as give him little claim to the rank aſſigned him by *Dryden* among the criticks. *Letters*, ſays he, *are intended as reſemblances of converſation, and the chief excellencies of converſation are good-humour and good-breeding*. This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquieſcence in his own diſcovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to pleaſe muſt appear pleaſed, and he who would not provoke rudeneſs muſt not practiſe it. But the queſtion among thoſe who eſtabliſh rules for an epiſtolary performance is how gaiety or civility may be properly expreſſed; as among the criticks in hiſtory it is not conteſted whether truth ought to be preſerved, but by what mode of diction it is beſt adorned.

As letters are written on all ſubjects, in all ſtates of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to ſettled rules, or deſcribed by any ſingle characteriſtick; and we may ſafely diſentangle our minds from critical embarraſſments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refuſed admiſſion

which

which would be proper in any other method of treating the ſame ſubject. The qualities of the epiſtolary ſtile moſt frequently required are eaſe and ſimplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artleſs arrangement of obvious ſentiments. But theſe directions are no ſooner applied to uſe, than their ſcantineſs and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at reſt and in diſtreſs, in ſport and in paſſion. Nothing can be more improper than eaſe and laxity of expreſſion when the importance of the ſubject impreſſes ſolicitude, or the dignity of the perſon exacts reverence.

That letters ſhould be written with ſtrict conformity to nature is true, becauſe nothing but conformity to nature can make any compoſition beautiful or juſt. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occaſions not familiar. Whatever elevates the ſentiments will conſequently raiſe the expreſſion; whatever fills us with hope or terror will produce ſome perturbation of images, and ſome figurative diſtortions of phraſe. Wherever we are ſtudious to pleaſe, we are afraid of truſting our firſt thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by ſtudied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of ſtile.

If the perſonages of the comick ſcene be allowed by *Horace* to raiſe their language in the tranſports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epiſtolary writer may likewiſe without cenſure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may, with all the ſolemnity of an hiſtorian, deduce them from their

their causes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistick method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetorick to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondents are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the matter and stile are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsick dignity it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like *Pliny*, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without *Pliny*'s eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude, and securing

curing acceptance; but he that has no preſent to make but a garland, a ribbon, or ſome petty curioſity, muſt endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpoſe for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or buſineſs tranſacted, is to preſerve in the minds of the abſent either love or eſteem; to excite love we muſt impart pleaſure, and to raiſe eſteem we muſt diſcover abilities. Pleaſure will generally be given, as abilities are diſplayed by ſcenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected ſallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no ſtrength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble muſt be poliſhed with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought ſurely to be laboured when they are intended to ſtand for things.

NUMB. 153. TUESDAY, *September* 3, 1751.

Turba Remi ſequitur fortunam, ut ſemper, et odit
Damnatos. Juv.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth ſtill finds followers, and misfortune foes.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are occaſions on which all apology is rudeneſs. He that has an unwelcome meſſage to deliver, may give ſome proof of tenderneſs and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual diſcovery, becauſe the mind, upon which

which the weight of ſorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more abſurd than to delay the communication of pleaſure, to torment curioſity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I ſhall therefore forbear the arts by which correſpondents generally ſecure admiſſion, for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I ſhall be read by you with a diſpoſition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illuſtrate and corroborate your own obſervations.

I was the ſecond ſon of a gentleman, whoſe patrimony had been waſted by a long ſucceſſion of ſquanderers, till he was unable to ſupport any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleneſs. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of life in ſtudy which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year diſpatched to the univerſity, without any rural honours. I had never killed a ſingle woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the univerſity I continued to enlarge my acquiſitions with little envy of the noiſy happineſs which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and having obtained my degree, retired to conſider at leiſure to what profeſſion I ſhould confine that application which had hitherto been diſſipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which cuſtom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reaſonable, yet to let looſe the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniencies of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every ſide;

ſide; and mechanicks have long ago diſcovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to reſt.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the *Indies* with a large fortune, which he had ſo much harraſſed himſelf in obtaining, that ſickneſs and infirmity left him no other deſire than to die in his native country. His wealth eaſily procured him an invitation to paſs his life with us, and being incapable of any amuſement but converſation, he neceſſarily became familiarized to me, whom he found ſtudious and domeſtick. Pleaſed with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increaſe it, I delighted his curioſity with hiſtorical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by enquiries after the products of diſtant countries, and the cuſtoms of their inhabitants.

My brother ſaw how much I advanced in the favour of our gueſt, who being without heirs, was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himſelf. He was indeed little qualified to ſolicit the affection of a traveller, for the remiſſneſs of his education had left him without any rule of action but his preſent humour. He often forſook the old gentleman, in the midſt of an adventure, becauſe the horn ſounded in the court-yard, and would have loſt an opportunity, not only of knowing the hiſtory, but ſharing the wealth of the mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the ſight of a horſe-race.

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It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This diſtinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

As no man is willing to believe that he ſuffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory compliances or malignant calumnies. To no purpoſe did I call upon my patron to atteſt my innocence, for who will believe what he wiſhes to be falſe? In the heat of diſappointment they forced their inmate by repeated inſults to depart from the houſe, and I was ſoon by the ſame treatment obliged to follow him.

He choſe his reſidence in the confines of *London*, where reſt, tranquillity, and medicine, reſtored him to part of the health which he had loſt. I pleaſed myſelf with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate poſſeſſion of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus diſtinguiſhed me, might hope to end his life without a total fruſtration of thoſe bleſſings, which, whatever be their real value, he had fought with ſo much diligence, and purchaſed with ſo many viciſſitudes of danger and fatigue.

He indeed left me no reaſon to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accuſtom me early to the uſe of money, and ſet apart for my expences ſuch a revenue as I had ſcarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myſelf that fortune has ſeen her golden cup once taſted without inebriation. Neither my modeſty nor prudence were overwhelmed

whelmed by affluence; my elevation was without inſolence, and my expence without profuſion. Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my underſtanding, I mingled in parties of gaiety, and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where inſtruction was to be found, and imagined that by ranging through all the diverſities of life I had acquainted myſelf fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I ſoon diſcovered how much was wanted to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to *Seneca*'s remark, I had hitherto ſeen the world but on one ſide. My patron's confidence in his increaſe of ſtrength tempted him to careleſſneſs and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him without any of the heir's affected grief or ſecret exultation; then preparing to take a legal poſſeſſion of his fortune, opened his cloſet, where I found a will, made at his firſt arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy ſufficient to ſupport me in the proſecution of my ſtudies.

I had not yet found ſuch charms in proſperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injuſtice, and made haſte to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindneſs, but by the delays of indolence, and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and ſoon made my diſappointment publick by the tumult of their claims, and the ſplendor of their ſorrow.

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It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge intitled to eminence, and in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches. I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me, without any change of posture, or collection of countenance, that their master was at home, and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally intreated to sit down, but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescensions.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stockjobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who upon my entrance advised me with great solemnity to think of some settled provision for life. I left him and hurried away to an old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from

from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

At sixty-seven doors at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was dispatched; at four was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one heard the footmen rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies, but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit, and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gaiety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance, and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I scatter infirmity and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I intreat to sing are troubled with colds; if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the head-ach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy,

money, and direct my purſuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally deſpicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my intereſt, and think themſelves entitled by their ſuperior prudence to reproach me if I ſpeak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. *Rambler*, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatneſs and the eye of beauty, gives ſpirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without underſtanding, the ſport of caprice, the ſcoff of inſolence, the ſlave of meanneſs, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

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NUMB. 154. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 7, 1751.

——Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
Aggredior, ſanctos auſus recludere fontes. VIRG.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raiſe,
And treat of arts diſclos'd in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the ſacred ſpring. DRYDEN.

THE direction of *Ariſtotle* to thoſe that ſtudy politicks, is, firſt to examine and underſtand what has been written by the ancients upon government; then to caſt their eyes round upon the world, and conſider by what cauſes the proſperity of communities is viſibly influenced, and why ſome are worſe, and others better adminiſtered.

The ſame method muſt be purſued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The firſt taſk is to ſearch books, the next

next to contemplate nature. He muſt firſt poſſeſs himſelf of the intellectual treaſures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increaſe them by his own collections.

The mental diſeaſe of the preſent generation, is impatience of ſtudy, contempt of the great maſters of ancient wiſdom, and a diſpoſition to rely wholly upon unaſſiſted genius and natural ſagacity. The wits of theſe happy days have diſcovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious anceſtors durſt never attempt; they cut the knots of ſophiſtry which it was formerly the buſineſs of years to untie, ſolve difficulties by ſudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long proceſſes of argument by immediate intuition.

Men who have flattered themſelves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waſte their lives over books, as a race of inferior beings condemned by nature to perpetual pupillage, and fruitleſsly endeavouring to remedy their barrenneſs by inceſſant cultivation, or ſuccour their feebleneſs by ſubſidiary ſtrength. They preſume that none would be more induſtrious than they, if they were not more ſenſible of deficiencies, and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modeſty only to his weakneſs.

It is however certain that no eſtimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than thoſe by which a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that by the natural attraction of ſimilitude, we aſſociate with men like ourſelves, young, ſprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accompliſhments by compariſon with theirs; when we have

once

once obtained an acknowledged ſuperiority over our acquaintances, imagination and deſire eaſily extend it over the reſt of mankind, and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourſelves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily liſtens to the voice of idleneſs, and ſoothes the ſlumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatneſs. A man elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and ſagacity of conjecture, ſoon concludes that he already poſſeſſes whatever toil and enquiry can confer. He then liſtens with eagerneſs to the wild objections which folly has raiſed againſt the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigeſted knowledge; deſcribes the miſchievous effects of heterogeneous ſciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroick merit of thoſe who deviate from preſcription, or ſhake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and univerſities.

All theſe pretenſions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which ſuperficial acuteneſs gains in triumphs over ignorance unſupported by vivacity, are obſerved by *Locke* to be loſt, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear againſt her; the ſallies of gaiety are ſoon repreſſed by calm confidence; and the artifices of ſubtilty are readily detected by thoſe who, having carefully ſtudied the queſtion, are not eaſily confounded or ſurpriſed.

But though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himſelf, and was really

born with a genius ſurpaſſing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet ſurely ſuch gifts of providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground, naturally fertile, is more ſhamefully culpable than he whoſe field would ſcarcely recompenſe his huſbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been tranſacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no uſe is made of the labours of paſt ages, the world muſt remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The diſcoveries of every man muſt terminate in his own advantage, and the ſtudies of every age be employed on queſtions which the paſt generation had diſcuſſed and determined. We may with as little reproach borrow ſcience as manufactures from our anceſtors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture, which our underſtandings will not ſupply.

To the ſtrongeſt and quickeſt mind it is far eaſier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetick and geometry may be comprehended by a cloſe attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himſelf that the ſtudy of a long life would have enabled him to diſcover them, when he ſees them yet unknown to ſo many nations, whom he cannot ſuppoſe leſs liberally endowed with natural reaſon, than the *Grecians* or *Egyptians?*

Every ſcience was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary ſtudents, and the gradual diſcoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flaſhes of inſtruction were ſtruck out by the fortuitous

tuitous colliſion of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philoſopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and tranſmitting unclouded to poſterity that light which had been kindled by cauſes out of his power. The happineſs of theſe caſual illuminations no man can promiſe to himſelf, becauſe no endeavours can procure them; and therefore whatever be our abilities or application we muſt ſubmit to learn from others what perhaps would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not ſome remote enquiry brought it to view; as treaſures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exerciſe of their common occupations.

The man whoſe genius qualifies him for great undertakings, muſt at leaſt be content to learn from books the preſent ſtate of human knowledge; that he may not aſcribe to himſelf the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long regiſtered; and waſte, in attempts which have already ſucceeded or miſcarried, that time which might have been ſpent with uſefulneſs and honour upon new undertakings.

But though the ſtudy of books is neceſſary, it is not ſufficient to conſtitute literary eminence. He that wiſhes to be counted among the benefactors of poſterity, muſt add by his own toil to the acquiſitions of his anceſtors, and ſecure his memory from neglect by ſome valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the waſtes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undiſciplined and barbarous; or by ſurveying more exactly her ancient

dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortreſſes and retreats where ſhe ſkulks undetected and undiſturbed. Every ſcience has its difficulties which yet call for ſolution before we attempt new ſyſtems of knowledge; as every country has its foreſts and marſhes, which it would be wiſe to cultivate and drain, before diſtant colonies are projected as a neceſſary diſcharge of the exuberance of inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind muſt have invention in the deſign or the execution; either the effect muſt itſelf be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown muſt be diſcovered, or thoſe which are already known enforced by ſtronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illuſtrations.

Fame cannot ſpread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to reſiſt the blaſt of malignity, and ſtand firm againſt the attacks of time, muſt contain in itſelf ſome original principle of growth. The reputation which ariſes from the detail or tranſpoſition of borrowed ſentiments, may ſpread for a while, like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and ſuffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

NUMB. 155. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 10, 1751.

——Steriles tranſmiſimus annos,
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ. STAT.

——Our barren years are paſt;
Be this of life the firſt, of ſloth the laſt. ELPHINSTON.

NO weakneſs of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadverſion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the eaſineſs with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It ſeems generally believed, that, as the eye cannot ſee itſelf, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own ſtate, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other poſtulates, an enquirer finds himſelf inclined to admit upon very little evidence, becauſe it affords a ready ſolution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greateſt abilities frequently fail to promote the happineſs of thoſe who poſſeſs them; why thoſe who can diſtinguiſh with the utmoſt nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, ſuffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant reſign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin, without one ſigh of ſolicitude or ſtruggle for eſcape.

When a poſition teems thus with commodious conſequences, who can without regret confeſs it to be falſe? Yet it is certain that declaimers have

indulged a diſpoſition to deſcribe the dominion of the paſſions as extended beyond the limits that nature aſſigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind; it does not hide our faults from ourſelves, but perſuades us that they eſcape the notice of others, and diſpoſes us to reſent cenſures leſt we ſhould confeſs them to be juſt. We are ſecretly conſcious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the publick eye, and pleaſe ourſelves with innumerable impoſtures, by which, in reality, no body is deceived.

In proof of the dimneſs of our internal ſight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the ſucceſs of the moſt abſurd and incredible flattery, and the reſentment always raiſed by advice, however ſoft, benevolent, and reaſonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it conſoles our wants than diſplays our poſſeſſions. He that ſhall ſolicit the favour of his patron by praiſing him for qualities which he can find in himſelf, will be defeated by the more daring panegyriſt who enriches him with adſcititious excellence. Juſt praiſe is only a debt, but flattery is a preſent. The acknowledgment of thoſe virtues on which conſcience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of thoſe which we only feign, or deſire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confeſſion of ſovereignty over regions never conquered, as a favourable deciſion of diſputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice

Advice is offenſive, not becauſe it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which had eſcaped our notice, but becauſe it ſhows us that we are known to others as well as to ourſelves; and the officious monitor is perſecuted with hatred, not becauſe his accuſation is falſe, but becauſe he aſſumes that ſuperiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we deſired to conceal.

For this reaſon advice is commonly ineffectual. If thoſe who follow the call of their deſires, without enquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wiſdom, and were ruſhing upon dangers unforeſeen, they would readily liſten to information that recals them from their errors, and catch the firſt alarm by which deſtruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way miſtake it for the right; they only find it more ſmooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it: therefore few are perſuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, ſince it impreſſes no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or reſiſtance. He that is gravely informed how ſoon profuſion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occaſion of expence, becauſe advice has no force to ſuppreſs his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his uſual ſpeed to a new courſe of luxury, becauſe his reaſon is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The miſchief of flattery is, not that it perſuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it ſuppreſſes the influence of honeſt ambition, by

raiſing an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice ariſes commonly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the diſcovery which it affords of the publick ſuffrages. He that could withſtand conſcience is frighted at infamy, and ſhame prevails when reaſon was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perſpicacity cannot diſcover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or diſſipated by levity, ſheltered by hypocriſy or blaſted by diſgrace, who does not intend ſome time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleaſure and intereſt, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itſelf by habit; and the change of manners, though ſincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when ſome craving paſſion ſhall be fully gratified, or ſome powerful allurement ceaſe its importunity.

Thus procraſtination is accumulated on procraſtination, and one impediment ſucceeds another, till age ſhatters our reſolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of ſalutary purpoſes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeaſed that diſquiet which every mind feels from known miſconduct, when the attention is not diverted by buſineſs or by pleaſure.

Nothing ſurely can be more unworthy of a reaſonable nature, than to continue in a ſtate ſo oppoſite

oppoſite to real happineſs, as that all the peace of ſolitude and felicity of meditation muſt ariſe from reſolutions of forſaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who paſs months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit or betrayed by paſſion into practices which they cloſed and opened their eyes with purpoſes to avoid; purpoſes which, though ſettled on conviction, the firſt impulſe of momentary deſire totally overthrows.

The influence of cuſtom is indeed ſuch, that to conquer it will require the utmoſt efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any man more worthy of veneration and renown, than thoſe who have burſt the ſhackles of habitual vice. This victory however has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroick as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of ſolicitation more frequent. He that from experience of the folly of ambition reſigns his offices, may ſet himſelf free at once from temptation to ſquander his life in courts, becauſe he cannot regain his former ſtation. He who is enſlaved by an amorous paſſion, may quit his tyrant in diſguſt, and abſence will, without the help of reaſon, overcome by degrees the deſire of returning. But thoſe appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory meaſures or gradual advances, are more tenaciouſly adheſive; the wiſh is ſo near the enjoyment, that compliance often precedes conſideration, and before the powers of reaſon can be ſummoned, the time for employing them is paſt.

Indolence is therefore one of the vices from which thoſe whom it once infects are ſeldom reformed. Every other ſpecies of luxury operates upon ſome appetite that is quickly ſatiated, and requires ſome concurrence of art or accident which every place will not ſupply; but the deſire of eaſe acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increaſed. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapſe to indolence is ſoft and imperceptible, becauſe it is only a mere ceſſation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, becauſe it implies a change from reſt to motion, from privation to reality.

Facilis deſcenſus averni:
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, ſuperaſque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor eſt.

The gates of *Hell* are open night and day;
Smooth the deſcent, and eaſy is the way;
But to return, and view the cheerful ſkies,
In this the taſk and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conſcious; we all know our own ſtate, if we could be induced to conſider it; and it might perhaps be uſeful to the conqueſt of all theſe enſnarers of the mind, if at certain ſtated days life was reviewed. Many things neceſſary are omitted, becauſe we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unſettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can ſcarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by

by periodical remorſe. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himſelf a deſire to diſtinguiſh every ſtage of his exiſtence by ſome improvement, and delight himſelf with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new ſeries of virtue and felicity.

NUMB. 156. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud ſapientia dicit. Juv.

For Wiſdom ever echoes Nature's voice.

EVERY government, ſay the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it muſt be reſcued at certain periods by the reſuſcitation of its firſt principles, and the re-eſtabliſhment of its original conſtitution. Every animal body, according to the methodick phyſicians, is, by the predominance of ſome exuberant quality, continually declining towards diſeaſe and death, which muſt be obviated by a ſeaſonable reduction of the peccant humour to the juſt equipoiſe which health requires.

In the ſame manner the ſtudies of mankind, all at leaſt which, not being ſubject to rigorous demonſtration, admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to error and confuſion. Of the great principles of truth which the firſt ſpeculatiſts diſcovered, the ſimplicity is embarraſſed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obſcured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they deſcend from one ſucceſſion of writers to another, like light tranſmitted from room to room,

they loſe their ſtrength and ſplendour, and fade at laſt in total evaneſcence.

The ſyſtems of learning therefore muſt be ſometimes reviewed, complications analyſed into principles, and knowledge diſentangled from opinion. It is not always poſſible, without a cloſe inſpection, to ſeparate the genuine ſhoots of conſequential reaſoning, which grow out of ſome radical poſtulate, from the branches which art has engrafted on it. The accidental preſcriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and thoſe rules are ſuppoſed coeval with reaſon, of which the firſt riſe cannot be diſcovered.

Criticiſm has ſometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be reſtrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected; her ſuperintendance of others has betrayed her to negligence of herſelf; and, like the ancient *Scythians*, by extending her conqueſts over diſtant regions, ſhe has left her throne vacant to her ſlaves.

Among the laws of which the deſire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted the preſcription, all which writers have received, had not the ſame original right to our regard. Some are to be conſidered as fundamental and indiſpenſable, others only as uſeful and convenient; ſome as dictated by reaſon and neceſſity, others as enacted by deſpotick antiquity; ſome as invincibly ſupported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or inſtituted by example, and therefore always liable to diſpute and alteration.

That

That many rules have been advanced without conſulting nature or reaſon, we cannot but ſuſpect, when we find it peremptorily decreed by the ancient maſters, that *only three ſpeaking perſonages ſhould appear at once upon the ſtage*; a law which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impoſſible to be obſerved, we now violate without ſcruple, and, as experience proves, without inconvenience.

The original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody or ſolitary ſong in honour of *Bacchus*, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another ſpeaker; but the ancients, remembering that the tragedy was at firſt pronounced only by one, durſt not for ſome time venture beyond two; at laſt, when cuſtom and impunity had made them daring, they extended their liberty to the admiſſion of three, but reſtrained themſelves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five, I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any neceſſity ariſing either from the nature of action or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the repreſentation of ſuch a part of the buſineſs of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenor, or without any intermediate pauſe. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and by conſequence of every dramatick action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and indeed the rule is upon the *Engliſh* ſtage every day broken in effect, without any other miſchief than that which ariſes from an abſurd endeavour to obſerve it in appearance. Whenever the ſcene is ſhifted the act ceaſes, ſince ſome

ſome time is neceſſarily ſuppoſed to elapſe while the perſonages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the criticks confined the dramatick action to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action ſhould approach ſomewhat nearly to that of exhibition, and thoſe plays will always be thought moſt happily conducted which croud the greateſt variety into the leaſt ſpace. But ſince it will frequently happen that ſome deluſion muſt be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely obſerved that minds not prepoſſeſſed by mechanical criticiſm feel any offence from the extenſion of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it abſurd or impoſſible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might image with equal eaſe a greater number.

I know not whether he that profeſſes to regard no other laws than thoſe of nature, will not be inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto ſhaded from the fulminations of criticiſm. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reaſon can condemn? The connexion of important with trivial incidents, ſince it is not only common but perpetual in the world, may ſurely be allowed upon the ſtage, which pretends only to be the mirrour of life. The impropriety of ſuppreſſing paſſions before we have raiſed them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expectation from an event which we keep ſuſpended only to raiſe it, may be ſpeciouſly urged. But will not experience ſhew this objection to be rather ſubtle than juſt? Is it not certain

that

that the tragick and comick affections have been moved alternately with equal force, and that no plays have oftener filled the eye with tears, and the breaſt with palpitation, than thoſe which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I do not however think it ſafe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. The reſiſtleſs viciſſitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and ſolemnity, may ſometimes be more properly aſcribed to the vigour of the writer than the juſtneſs of the deſign: and inſtead of vindicating tragi-comedy by the ſucceſs of *Shakeſpeare*, we ought perhaps to pay new honours to that tranſcendent and unbounded genius that could preſide over the paſſions in ſport; who, to actuate the affections, needed not the ſlow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with inſtantaneous jollity or ſorrow, and vary our diſpoſition as he changed his ſcenes. Perhaps the effects even of *Shakeſpeare*'s poetry might have been yet greater, had he not counteracted himſelf; and we might have been more intereſted in the diſtreſſes of his heroes, had we not been ſo frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

There are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is neceſſary that of every play the chief action ſhould be ſingle; for ſince a play repreſents ſome tranſaction, through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important muſt evidently conſtitute two plays.

As the deſign of tragedy is to inſtruct by moving the paſſions, it muſt always have a hero, a perſonage apparently and inconteſtably ſuperior to the reſt, upon whom the attention may be fixed, and the anxiety ſuſpended. For though of two perſons

ſons oppoſing each other with equal abilities and equal virtue, the auditor will inevitably in time chooſe his favourite, yet as that choice muſt be without any cogency of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raiſes will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy againſt a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, becauſe each claims our concern with the ſame right, and the heart lies at reſt between equal motives.

It ought to be the firſt endeavour of a writer to diſtinguiſh nature from cuſtom; or that which is eſtabliſhed becauſe it is right, from that which is right only becauſe it is eſtabliſhed; that he may neither violate eſſential principles by a deſire of novelty, nor debar himſelf from the attainment of beauties within his view by a needleſs fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

NUMB. 157. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 17, 1751.

—— Οἱ αἰδὼς
Γίγνεται, ἠ ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησιν. HOM.

Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind.

ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH one of your correſpondents has preſumed to mention with ſome contempt that preſence of attention and eaſineſs of addreſs, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and eſteem, yet I cannot be perſuaded to think them unworthy

unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe that, as we ſeldom value rightly what we have never known the miſery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happineſs; and that a natural exuberance of aſſurance has hindered him from diſcovering its excellence and uſe.

This felicity, whether beſtowed by conſtitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can ſcarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happineſs of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of aſſertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the ſplendour of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I therefore purſued my ſtudies with inceſſant induſtry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to conſider either as vicious or tending to vice, becauſe I regarded guilt and reproach as inſeparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greateſt calamity.

At the univerſity, I found no reaſon for changeing my opinion; for though many among my fellow-ſtudents took the opportunity of a more remiſs diſcipline to gratify their paſſions; yet virtue preſerved her natural ſuperiority, and thoſe who ventured to neglect, were not ſuffered to inſult her. The ambition of petty accompliſhments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was obſerved to ſeize commonly on thoſe who either neglected the ſciences, or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed in the doctrines of my old maſter, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

This

This purity of manners, and intenſeneſs of application, ſoon extended my renown, and I was applauded by thoſe, whoſe opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themſelves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I returned home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticiſm and philoſophy. The wit and the ſcholar excited curioſity, and my acquaintance was ſolicited by innumerable invitations. To pleaſe will always be the wiſh of benevolence, to be admired muſt be the conſtant aim of ambition; and I therefore conſidered myſelf as about to receive the reward of my honeſt labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

The third day after my arrival I dined at the houſe of a gentleman who had ſummoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding-day. I ſet forward with great exultation, and thought myſelf happy that I had an opportunity of diſplaying my knowledge to ſo numerous an aſſembly. I felt no ſenſe of my own inſufficiency, till going up ſtairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obſtreperous merriment. I was however diſguſted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company roſe at my entrance; but when I ſaw ſo many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blaſted with a ſudden imbecillity, I was quelled by ſome nameleſs power which I found impoſſible to be reſiſted. My ſight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harraſſed by the multitude of

eager

eager ſalutations, and returned the common civilities with heſitation and impropriety; the ſenſe of my own blunders increaſed my confuſion, and before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to ſit down, I was ready to ſink under the oppreſſion of ſurprize; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

The aſſembly then reſumed their places, and I ſat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the queſtions of curioſity, or the appeals of complaiſance, I could ſeldom anſwer but with negative monoſyllables, or profeſſions of ignorance; for the ſubjects on which they converſed, were ſuch as are ſeldom diſcuſſed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reaſon of my conciſeneſs, relieved me by ſome queſtions about the preſent ſtate of natural knowledge, and engaged me, by an appearance of doubt and oppoſition, in the explication and defence of the *Newtonian* philoſophy.

The conſciouſneſs of my own abilities rouſed me from depreſſion, and long familiarity with my ſubject enabled me to diſcourſe with eaſe and volubility; but however I might pleaſe myſelf, I found very little added by my demonſtrations to the ſatisfaction of the company; and my antagoniſt, who knew the laws of converſation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleaſing topick, after he had commended my acuteneſs and comprehenſion, diſmiſſed the controverſy, and reſigned me to my former inſignificance and perplexity.

After dinner, I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-

tea-table. I congratulated myſelf upon an opportunity to eſcape from the company, whoſe gaiety began to be tumultuous, and among whom ſeveral hints had been dropped of the uſeleſſneſs of univerſities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardneſs of ſcholars. To the ladies therefore I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, inſult, and ruſticity; but found my heart ſink as I approached their apartment, and was again diſconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the neceſſity of encountering ſo many eyes at once.

When I ſat down I conſidered that ſomething pretty was always ſaid to ladies, and reſolved to recover my credit by ſome elegant obſervation or graceful compliment. I applied myſelf to the recollection of all that I had read or heard in praiſe of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate ſome claſſical compliment to the preſent occaſion. I ſunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, conſidered whatever the poets have ſung in their praiſe, and after having borrowed and invented, choſen and rejected a thouſand ſentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been underſtood, I was awakened from my dream of learned galantry, by the ſervant who diſtributed the tea.

There are not many ſituations more inceſſantly uneaſy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to ſpeak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, though he reſolves to give a ſpecimen of his abilities, always finds ſome reaſon or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was aſhamed of ſilence, yet could find nothing to ſay of elegance or importance equal to my wiſhes. The ladies, afraid

afraid of my learning, thought themſelves not qualified to propoſe any ſubject of prattle to a man ſo famous for diſpute, and there was nothing on either ſide but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of ſhame, as I was reaſſembling my ſcattered ſentiments, and, reſolving to force my imagination to ſome ſprightly ſally, had juſt found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I ſuffered the ſaucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lap-dog was ſcalded, a brocaded petticoat was ſtained, and the whole aſſembly was thrown into diſorder. I now conſidered all hopes of reputation as at an end, and while they were conſoling and aſſiſting one another, ſtole away in ſilence.

The miſadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meaneſt of them that triumphed over me in this ſtate of ſtupidity and contempt, and feel the ſame terrors encroaching upon my heart at the ſight of thoſe who have once impreſſed them. Shame, above any other paſſion, propagates itſelf. Before thoſe who have ſeen me confuſed, I can never appear without new confuſion, and the remembrance of the weakneſs which I formerly diſcovered, hinders me from acting or ſpeaking with my natural force.

But is this miſery, Mr. *Rambler*, never to ceaſe? have I ſpent my life in ſtudy only to become the ſport of the ignorant, and debarred myſelf from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which muſt ſleep in ſilence, and form opinions which I muſt not divulge? Inform me, dear Sir, by what means I may reſcue my faculties from theſe

theſe ſhackles of cowardice, how I may riſe to a level with my fellow-beings, recal myſelf from this languor of involuntary ſubjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reaſoning the liberty of ſpeech.

I am, Sir, &c.

VERECUNDULUS.

NUMB. 158. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 21, 1751.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc ſub judice lis eſt. HOR.

——Criticks yet contend,
And of their vain diſputings find no end. FRANCIS.

CRITICISM, though dignified from the earlieſt ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and ſagacity, and, ſince the revival of polite literature, the favourite ſtudy of *European* ſcholars, has not yet attained the certainty and ſtability of ſcience. The rules hitherto received, are ſeldom drawn from any ſettled principle or ſelf-evident poſtulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable conſtitution of things; but will be found upon examination the arbitrary edicts of legiſlators, authoriſed only by themſelves, who, out of various means by which the ſame end may be attained, ſelected ſuch as happened to occur to their own reflexion, and then by a law which idleneſs and timidity were too willing to obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, reſtrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned

condemned all future flights of genius to purſue the path of the *Meonian* eagle.

This authority may be more juſtly oppoſed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to controul; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteneſs of criticks, who have generally no other merit than that, having read the works of great authors with attention, they have obſerved the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expreſſion, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented: ſo that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

For this reaſon the laws of every ſpecies of writing have been ſettled by the ideas of him who firſt raiſed it to reputation, without enquiry whether his performances were not yet ſuſceptible of improvement. The excellencies and faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to poſterity; and ſo far has blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

The imagination of the firſt authors of lyrick poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extenſive. Living in an age when ſcience had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors, not being accuſtomed to accurate inſpection, were eaſily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themſelves to inſtruct, rather by ſhort ſentences and ſtriking thoughts, than by regular argumentation; and finding attention more ſucceſsfully excited by ſudden ſallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction,

deduction, they looſed their genius to its own courſe, paſſed from one ſentiment to another without expreſſing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with ſuch lightneſs and agility, that their footſteps are ſcarcely to be traced.

From this accidental peculiarity of the ancient writers the criticks deduce the rules of lyrick poetry, which they have ſet free from all the laws by which other compoſitions are confined, and allow to neglect the niceties of tranſition, to ſtart into remote digreſſions, and to wander without reſtraint from one ſcene of imagery to another.

A writer of later times has, by the vivacity of his eſſays, reconciled mankind to the ſame licentiouſneſs in ſhort diſſertations; and he therefore who wants ſkill to form a plan, or diligence to purſue it, needs only entitle his performance an eſſay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

In writing, as in life, faults are endured without diſguſt when they are aſſociated with tranſcendent merit, and may be ſometimes recommended to weak judgments by the luſtre which they obtain from their union with excellence; but it is the buſineſs of thoſe who preſume to ſuperintend the taſte or morals of mankind, to ſeparate deluſive combinations, and diſtinguiſh that which may be praiſed from that which can only be excuſed. As vices never promote happineſs, though when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues, they cannot totally deſtroy it; ſo confuſion and irregularity produce no beauty, though they cannot always

obſtruct the brightneſs of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect diſtant propoſitions by regular conſequences, is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected ſentiments flaſhing upon the mind in quick ſucceſſion, may, for a time, delight by their novelty, but they differ from ſyſtematical reaſoning, as ſingle notes from harmony, as glances of lightning from the radiance of the ſun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reaſon, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errors of thoſe who criticiſe his works; ſince they may often miſlead their pupils by falſe repreſentations, as the *Ciceronians* of the ſixteenth century were betrayed into barbariſms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is eſtabliſhed at preſent, that the proemial lines of a poem, in which the general ſubject is propoſed, muſt be void of glitter and embelliſhment. "The firſt lines of *Paradiſe Loſt*," ſays *Addiſon*, "are perhaps as plain, ſimple, and un-"adorned, as any of the whole poem, in which "particular the author has conformed himſelf "to the example of *Homer* and the precept of "*Horace*."

This obſervation ſeems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion, without conſideration either of the precept or example. Had *Horace* been conſulted, he would have been found to direct only what ſhould be compriſed in the propoſition, not how it ſhould be expreſſed, and to have commended *Homer* in oppoſition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual

elevation of his diction, but the judicious expanſion of his plan; for diſplaying unpromiſed events, not for producing unexpected elegancies.

——*Speciosa dehinc miracula promit,*
Antiphaten Scyllamque, & cum Cyclope Charybdim.

But from a cloud of ſmoke he breaks to light,
And pours his ſpecious miracles to ſight;
Antiphates his hideous feaſt devours,
Charybdis barks, and *Polyphemus* roars. FRANCIS.

If the exordial verſes of *Homer* be compared with the reſt of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainneſs or ſimplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated.

Ἀνδρά μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων·
Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο ἱέμενός περ·
Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
Νήπιοι οἱ κατὰ βοῦς ὑπερίονος ἠελίοιο
Ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.
Τῶν ἁμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διὸς, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

The man, for wiſdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, O muſe! reſound.
Who, when his arms had wrought the deſtin'd fall
Of ſacred *Troy*, and rez'd her heav'n-built wall,
Wand'ring from clime to clime obſervant ſtray'd,
Their manners noted, and their ſtates ſurvey'd.
On ſtormy ſeas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal ſhore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day:
The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah men unbleſs'd) to touch that natal ſhore.
O ſnatch ſome portion of theſe acts from fate,
Celeſtial muſe! and to our world relate. POPE.

The firſt verſes of the *Iliad* are in like manner particularly ſplendid, and the propoſition of the *Æneid* cloſes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of *Virgil*.

The intent of the introduction is to raiſe expectation, and ſuſpend it; ſomething therefore muſt be diſcovered, and ſomething concealed; and the poet, while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himſelf by the grace of his language.

He that reveals too much, or promiſes too little; he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately ſatiates it, equally defeats his own purpoſe. It is neceſſary to the pleaſure of the reader, that the events ſhould not be anticipated, and how then can his attention be invited, but by grandeur of expreſſion?

NUMB. 159. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Poſſis, et magnam morbi deponere partem. HOR.

The pow'r of words, and ſoothing ſounds, appeaſe
The raging pain, and leſſen the diſeaſe. FRANCIS.

THE imbecillity with which *Verecundulus* complains that the preſence of a numerous aſſembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the ſtudious part of mankind, whoſe education neceſſarily ſecludes them in their earlier years from mingled converſe, till at their diſmiſſion from ſchools and academies they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and coming forth from the gloom of ſolitude are overpowered by the blaze of publick life.

It is perhaps kindly provided by nature, that, as the feathers and ſtrength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till ſhe is able to fly, ſo ſome proportion ſhould be preſerved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore reſtrained by ſhame, and we remain ſhackled by timidity, till we have learned to ſpeak and act with propriety.

I believe few can review the days of their youth, without recollecting temptations, which ſhame, rather than virtue, enabled them to reſiſt; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles, and dangerous in their conſequences, they have panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themſelves irreſiſtibly depreſſed by a languid anxiety, which ſeized them at the moment of utterance, and ſtill gathered ſtrength from their endeavours to reſiſt it.

It generally happens, that aſſurance keeps an even pace with ability, and the fear of miſcarriage, which hinders our firſt attempts, is gradually diſſipated as our ſkill advances towards certainty of ſucceſs. That baſhfulneſs therefore which prevents diſgrace, that ſhort and temporary ſhame, which ſecures us from the danger of laſting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Baſhfulneſs, however it may incommode for a moment, ſcarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its miſchiefs ſoon paſs off without remembrance. It may ſometimes exclude pleaſure, but ſeldom opens any avenue to ſorrow or remorſe.

It

It is obſerved ſomewhere; that *few have repented of having forborn to ſpeak.*

To excite oppoſition and inflame malevolence is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by conſciouſneſs of ſtrength. No man finds in himſelf any inclination to attack or oppoſe him who confeſſes his ſuperiority by bluſhing in his preſence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulneſs, receive applauſe from every voice, and ſupport from every hand. Diffidence may check reſolution and obſtruct performance, but compenſates its embarraſſments by more important advantages; it conciliates the proud, and ſoftens the ſevere, averts envy from excellence, and cenſure from miſcarriage.

It may indeed happen that knowledge and virtue remain too long concealed by this fantaſtick power, as the principles of vegetation are ſometimes obſtructed by lingering froſts. He that enters late into a publick ſtation, though with all the abilities requiſite to the diſcharge of his duty, will find his powers at firſt impeded by a timidity which he himſelf knows to be vicious, and muſt ſtruggle long againſt dejection and reluctance, before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulneſs of eaſe to the dignity of merit.

For this diſeaſe of the mind, I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To adviſe a man unaccuſtomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation, to tell him whoſe life has paſſed in the ſhades of contemplation, that he muſt not be diſconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a ſplendid aſſembly, is

to adviſe an inhabitant of *Brazil* or *Sumatra*, not to ſhiver at an *Engliſh* winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look from a precipice without emotion. It is to ſuppoſe cuſtom inſtantaneouſly controllable by reaſon, and to endeavour to communicate by precept that which only time and habit can beſtow.

He that hopes by philoſophy and contemplation alone to fortify himſelf againſt that awe which all, at their firſt appearance on the ſtage of life, muſt feel from the ſpectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his reſolution; and I doubt whether the preſervatives which *Plato* relates *Alcibiades* to have received from *Socrates*, when he was about to ſpeak in publick, proved ſufficient to ſecure him from the powerful faſcination.

Yet as the effects of time may by art and induſtry be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to conſider how this troubleſome inſtinct may be oppoſed when it exceeds its juſt proportion, and inſtead of repreſſing petulance and temerity, ſilences eloquence, and debilitates force; ſince, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety ſhould be immediately diſſipated, it may be at leaſt ſomewhat abated; and the paſſions will operate with leſs violence, when reaſon riſes againſt them, than while ſhe either ſlumbers in neutrality, or, miſtaking her intereſt, lends them her aſſiſtance.

No cauſe more frequently produces baſhfulneſs than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an aſſembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation, and huſhed with attention, eaſily terrifies himſelf with the

dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and shew that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers, that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy are suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency.

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will perhaps not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom perhaps not one appears to deserve our notice, or excites our sympathy, we should remember, that we likewise are lost in the same throng, that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us, and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear is to fill a vacant hour with prattle, and be forgotten.

END of the THIRD VOLUME.

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Prefaces BIOGRAPHICAL and CRITICAL,

By SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.